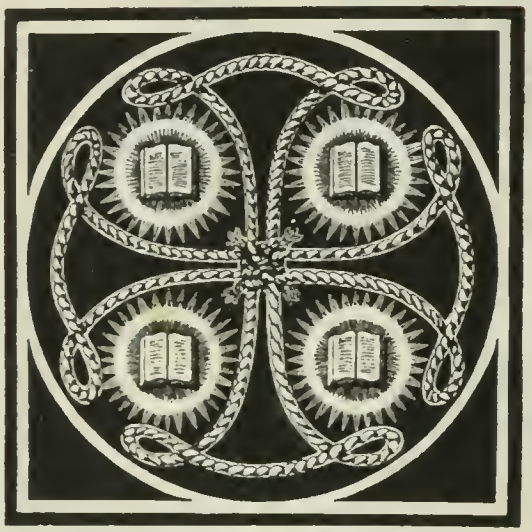

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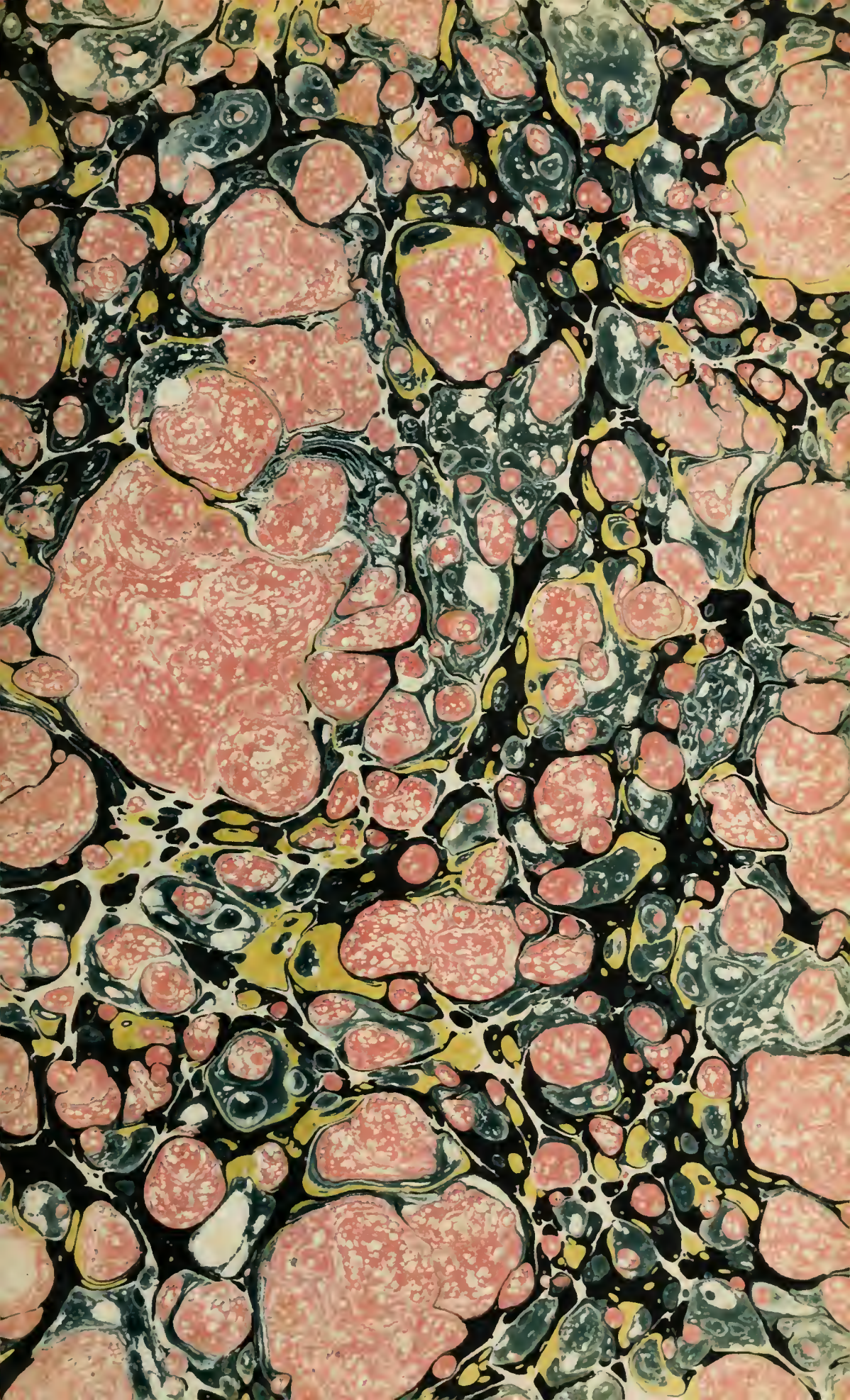

THE

WORKS

OF THE

RIGHT REVEREND FATHER IN GOD,

JOSEPH HALL, D.D.

SUCCESSIVELY BISHOP OF EXETER AND NORWICH:

NOW FIRST COLLECTED.

WITH SOME

ACCOUNT OF HIS LIFE AND SUFFERINGS,

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

ARRANGED AND REVISED,

WITH A GLOSSARY, INDEX, AND OCCASIONAL NOTES,

BY JOSIAH PRATT, B.D. F.A.S.

LECTURER OF THE UNITED PARISHES OF ST. MARY WOOLNOTH AND ST. MARY WOOLCHURCH HAW, AND LADY CAMDEN'S WEDNESDAY EVENING LECTURER AT THE CHURCH OF ST. LAWRENCE JEWRY, LONDON.

IN TEN VOLUMES.

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THE

REMEDY OF DISCONTENTMENT:

OR, A

TREATISE OF CONTENTATION

IN WHATSOEVER CONDITION:

FIT FOR THESE SAD AND TROUBLED TIMES.

BY JOSEPH, BISHOP OF NORWICH.

I HAVE perused this Treatise, entitled "The Remedy of Discontentment;" and, judging it to be very pious, profitable, and necessary for these Sad and Distracted Times, I License it to be printed and published; and should much commend it to the Christian Reader, if the very name of the Author were not in itself sufficient, without any further testimony.

JOHN DOWNAME.

TO

THE CHRISTIAN READER,

GRACE AND PEACE.

WHAT can be more seasonable, than, when all the world is sick of Discontentment, to give Counsels and Recipes of Contentation?

Perhaps the patient will think it a time ill chosen for physic, in the midst of a fit: but, in this case, we must do as we may. I confess, I would rather have staid till the paroxysm were happily over; that so, the humours being somewhat settled, I might hope for the more kindly operation of this wholesome medicine. But, partly, my age and weakness, despairing to outlive the public distemper; and, partly, my judgment, crossing the vulgar opinion for the season of some kind of Recipes; have now put me upon this safe and useful prescription.

God is my witness, that I wrote this in the depth of mine own afflictions; the particulars whereof, it were unseasonable to trouble the world withal: as one, that meant to make myself my own patient, by enjoining myself that course of remedies, that I prescribe to others; and as one, who, by the powerful working of God's Spirit within me, labour to find my heart framed to those holy dispositions, which I wish and recommend to every Christian soul.

If there be no remedy, but the worst of outward troubles must afflict us; it shall be happy yet, if we may find inward peace in our bosoms: which shall be, if we can reconcile ourselves to our offended God; and calm our spirits to a meek undergoing of those sufferings, which the Divine Providence hath thought fit to measure forth unto us. This is the main drift of this ensuing labour.

Now the same God, who hath, in these blustering times, put into my heart these quiet thoughts of Holy Contentation, bless them in every hand, that shall receive them; and make them effectual to the good of every soul, that shall now and hereafter entertain them! that so their gracious proficiency may, in the day of the appearance of our Lord Jesus, add to the joy of my account; who am the unworthiest of the servants of God and his Church.

J. N.

THE METHOD* OF THIS TREATISE.

- Contentation in knowing
  - *HOW TO WANT.*
    - I. WHAT IT IS, to know how to want and to be abased.
    - II. HOW TO BE ATTAINED: wherein there will be use of certain
      - I. CONSIDERATIONS which respect
        - (1.) The *Diversities of life;* as
          - [1.] Of the Valuation of Earthly Things.
            - (a.) The Transitoriness of Life, &c.
            - (b.) Unsatisfying Condition of them.
            - (c.) Danger of over-esteeming them.
          - [2.] Of Divine Providence over-ruling all Events.
          - [3.] Of the Worse Condition of others.
          - [4.] Of the Inconveniences of great Estates.
            - (a.) Expose to Envy.
            - (b.) Macerate with Cares.
            - (c.) Danger of Distemper, both bodily and spiritual.
            - (d.) Torment in parting.
            - (e.) Account to be rendered.
          - [5.] Of the Benefits of Poverty.
            - (a.) Freedom from Cares.
            - (b.) Freedom from Fears of Keeping.
            - (c.) Freedom from Fears of losing.
          - [6.] Of how little will suffice Nature.
          - [7.] Of the Miseries of Discontentment.
          - [8.] Of the Vicissitudes of Favours and Crosses.
          - [9.] Examples of Contentation, both without and within the Church of God.
        - (2.) *Death* itself: wherein are to be considered
          - [1.] Remedies against the Terrors of Death.
            - (a.) Necessity and Benefit of Death.
            - (b.) Conscience of a well-led Life.
            - (c.) Final Peace with God.
            - (d.) Efficacy of Christ's Death applied.
            - (e.) Comfortable Expectation of certain Resurrection and immediate Vision of God.
          - [2.] Miseries and Inconveniencies of the continued Conjunction of Soul and Body.
            - (a.) Defilement of Sin Original.
            - (b.) Proneness to Sin.
            - (c.) Difficulty of doing well.
            - (d.) Dulness of Understanding.
            - (e.) Perpetual Conflicts.
            - (f.) Solicitude of Cares.
            - (g.) Multiplicity of Passions.
            - (h.) Retardation of Glory.
      - 2. DISPOSITIONS.
        - (1). *Humility.*
        - (2.) *Self-Resignation.*
        - (3.) *True Inward Riches.*
      - 3. RESOLUTIONS.
        - (1.) *That our Present Condition is best for us.*
        - (2.) *To abate of our Desires.*
        - (3.) *To digest smaller Inconveniencies.*
        - (4.) *To be Frequent and Fervent in Prayer.*
  - *HOW TO ABOUND.*

* This Analysis is arranged somewhat differently from that printed in the former editions, to render it more conformable to the Treatise itself. EDITOR.

THE

REMEDY OF DISCONTENTMENT.

INTRODUCTION.

The Excellency of Contentation; and how it is to be had.—The Contrariety of Estates, wherein Contentation is to be exercised.

If there be any happiness to be found upon earth, it is in that, which we call Contentation. This is a flower, that grows not in every garden. The great Doctor of the Gentiles tells us, that he had it. *I have learned*, saith he, *in what estate soever I am, therewith to be content: I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound* *. Lo, he could not have taken out this lesson, if he had not learnt it: and he could not have learnt it of any other, than his Master in Heaven. What face soever philosophy may set upon it, all morality cannot reach it; neither could his learned Gamaliel, at whose feet he sat, have put this skill into him: no, he learnt it since he was a Christian, and now professeth it. So as it appears, there is a Divine Art of Contentation to be attained in the School of Christ: which whosoever hath learnt, hath taken a degree in heaven; and now knows, how to be happy, both in want and abundance.

The nature of man is extremely querulous. We know not what we would have; and, when we have it, we know not how to like it. We would be happy: yet we would not die. We would live long: yet we would not be old. We would be kept in order: yet we would not be chastized with affliction. We are loth to work: yet are weary of doing nothing. We have no list to stir: yet find long sitting painful †. We have no mind to leave our bed: yet find it a kind of sickness to lie long. We would marry; but would not be troubled with household cares: when once we are married, we wish we had kept single. If, therefore, grace have so mastered nature in us, as to render us content with whatever condition, we have attained to no small measure of perfection. Which way soever the wind blows, the skilful mariner knows how to turn his sails to meet it. The contrariety of estates to which we lie open here, gives us

* Phil. iv. 11. ἔμαθον: Verse 12. μεμύημαι.

† *Si sedeas, requies est magna laboris; si multùm sedeas, labor est.* Tert. Carm.

different occasions for the exercise of Contentation. I cannot blame their choice, who desire a middle estate, betwixt want and abundance; and to be free from those inconveniences, which attend both extremes. Wise Solomon was of this diet: *Give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with the food of my meet allowance;* Prov. xxx. 8. Lo, he, that had all, desired rather to have but enough. And, if any estate can afford contentment in this life, surely this is it, in the judgment and experience of the wisest heathen *. But, forasmuch as this equal poise is hardly attainable by any man, and is more proper for our wishes and speculation than for our hopes, true wisdom must teach us so to compose ourselves, that we may be fit to entertain the discontentments and dangers of those excesses and defects, which we cannot but meet with in the course of our mortal life: and, surely, we shall find, that both extremes are enemies to this good temper of the soul: prosperity may discompose us, as well as an adverse condition: the sunshine may be as troublesome to the traveller, as the wind or rain. Neither know I whether is more hard to manage, of the two; a dejected estate, or a prosperous; whether we may be more incommodated with a resty horse, or with a tired one.

PART THE FIRST.

CONTENTATION, IN KNOWING HOW TO WANT.

Let us begin with that, which nature is wont to think most difficult: that, contrary to the practice of learners, we may try to take out the hardest lesson first. Let us therefore learn, in the first place, *HOW TO WANT.*

CHAP. I.

WHAT IT IS TO KNOW HOW TO WANT, AND TO BE ABASED.

SECT. 1.

How many do not know how to want.

COULD we teach men how not to want, we should have disciples enow. Every man seeks to have, and hates to lack. Could we give an antidote against poverty, it would be too precious. And why can we not teach men even this lesson too? *The Lord is my shepherd*, saith David; *therefore can I lack nothing;* Ps. xxiii. 1: and most sweetly, elsewhere; *Oh, fear the Lord, ye that be his saints; for they, that fear him, lack nothing. The lions do lack and suffer hun-*

* Senec. de Tranquil.

ger; but they, which seek the Lord, shall want no manner of thing that is good; Ps. xxxiv. 9, 10. *Let God be true, and every man a liar.* Certainly, if we were not wanting to God, in our fear of him, in our faithful reliance upon him, in our conscionable seeking of him, he, whose the earth is and the fulness of it, would not suffer our careful endeavours to go weeping away. But, if it so fall out, that his most wise Providence finds it better for us to be held short in our worldly estate; as it may be the great Physician sees it most for our health to be kept fasting: it is no less worth our learning, to know how to want. For, there is many a one, that wants; but knows not how to want, and therefore his need makes him both offensive and miserable.

There are those, that are poor and proud; one of the Wise Man's three abominations; Ecclus. xxv. 2: foolish Laodiceans, that bear themselves for rich, increased with goods, and lacking nothing; when they are no other than wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked; Rev. iii. 17. These men know not how to want: their heart is too big for their purse: and, surely, pride, though every where odious; yet doth no where so ill, as in rags.

There are those, that are poor and envious; looking with an evil eye upon the better fare of others: as, surely, this vice dwells more commonly in cottages, than in palaces. How displeasedly doth the beggar look upon the larger alms of his neighbour: grudging to another whatever falls beside himself; and misliking his own dole, because the next hath more! whose eye, with the discontented labourers, is evil, because his master's is good; Matt. xx. 15. neither do these men know how to want.

There are those, that want distrustfully; measuring the merciful provision of the Almighty, by the line of their own sense: as the Samaritan peer, when, in the extremity of a present famine, he heard the Prophet foretel a sudden plenty; *Behold, if the Lord would make windows in heaven, might this thing be?* 2 Kings vii. 2.

There are those, that want impatiently; repining at God's dealing with them, and making their own impotent anger guilty of a further addition to their misery: as the distressed king of Israel, in a desperate sense of that grievous dearth; *Behold, this evil is of the Lord; what should I wait on the Lord any longer?* 2 Kings vi. 33. and those wretched ones, who, when the fourth angel had poured out his phial upon the sun, being scorched with the extremity of the heat, blasphemed the God of Heaven; Rev. xvi. 9, 11. In this kind, was that sinful techiness of Jonah. When I see a poor worm, that hath put itself out of the cool cell of the earth, wherein it was lodged; and now, being beaten upon by the sun-beams, lies wriggling upon the bare path, turning itself every way in vain, and not finding so much as the shade of a leaf to cover it; I cannot but think of that fretting prophet, when, wanting the protection of his gourd, he found himself scalded with that strong reflection; looking up wrathfully towards that sun, from whom he smarted, could say to the God that made it, *I do well to be angry, even to the death;* Jonah iv. 9.

Lastly, there are those, that are poor and dishonest, even out of the very suggestion of their want. It was the danger hereof, that made Agur, the son of Jakeh, pray against penury; *Lest I be poor, and steal; and*, by forswearing it, *take the name of God in vain*; Prov. xxx. 9.

SECT. 2.

Who they are, that know how to want.

THESE, and perhaps others, do and must want; but, in the mean time, they do that, which they know not how to do: There is a skill in wanting, which they have not.

THOSE ONLY KNOW HOW TO WANT, that have learnt to frame their mind to their estate; like to a skilful musician, that can let down his strings a peg lower, when the tune requires it; or like to some cunning spagirick, that can intend or remit the heat of his furnace, according to occasion: those, who, when they must be abased, can stoop submissly; like to a gentle reed, which, when the wind blows stiff, yields every way: those, that in an humble obeisance, can lay themselves low at the foot of the Almighty, and put their mouth in the dust; that can patiently put their necks under the yoke of the Highest, and can say, with the Prophet, *Truly, this is my sorrow, and I must bear it*; Jer. x. 19: those, that can smile upon their afflictions; rejoicing in tribulation; singing in the jail, with Paul and Silas, at midnight: lastly, those, that can improve misery to an advantage; being the richer for their want; bettered, with evils; strengthened, with infirmities; and can truly say to the Almighty, *I know that of very faithfulness thou hast afflicted me*: never could they have come out so pure metal, if they had not passed under the hand of the refiner; never had they proved so toward children, if they had not been beholden to the rod.

These are they, that know how to want, and to be abased; and have effectually learned to be content with the meanest condition.

CHAP. II.

HOW TO BE ATTAINED.

To which happy temper THAT WE MAY ATTAIN, there will be use of, 1. Certain CONSIDERATIONS: 2. Certain DISPOSITIONS: and 3. Certain RESOLUTIONS. These three shall be as the Grounds and Rules of this our Divine Art of Contentation.

SECT. 1.

Considerations for Contentment: which respect,

(1.) *The* DIVERSITIES OF LIFE; *as* [1.] *Of the Valuation of Earthly Things; viz.* (a.) *The Transitoriness of Life, Honour, Beauty, Strength, and Pleasure;* (b.) *Unsatisfying Condition of them;* (c.) *Danger of over-esteeming them:*—[2.] *Of Divine Providence over-ruling all Events:*—[3.] *Of the Worse Condition of Others:* [4.] *Of the Inconveniences of Great Estates; viz.* (a.) *Expose to Envy;* (b.) *Macerate with Cares;* (c.) *Danger of Distemper, both bodily and spiritual;* (d.) *Torment in Parting;* (e.) *Account to be rendered:*—[5.] *Of the Benefits of Poverty; viz.* (a.) *Freedom from Cares;* (b.) *Freedom from Fears of Keeping;* (c.) *Freedom from Fears of Losing:*—[6.] *Of how little will suffice Nature:*—[7.] *Of the Miseries of Discontentment:*—[8.] *Of the Vicissitudes of Favours and Crosses:*—[9.] *Examples of Contentation, both within and without the Church of God.*

(2.) DEATH *itself: wherein are to be considered,* [1.] *Remedies against the Terrors of Death; viz.* (a.) *Necessity and Benefit of Death;* (b.) *Conscience of a well-led Life;* (c.) *Final Peace with God;* (d.) *Efficacy of Christ's Death applied;* (e.) *Comfortable Expectation of certain Resurrection, and immediate Vision of God:*—[2.] *Miseries and Inconveniences of the continued Conjunction of Soul and Body; viz.* (a.) *Defilement of Sin Original;* (b.) *Proneness to Sin;* (c.) *Difficulty of doing well;* (d.) *Dulness of Understanding;* (e.) *Perpetual Conflicts;* (f.) *Solicitude of Cares;* (g.) *Multiplicity of Passions;* (h.) *Retardation of Glory.*

THESE CONSIDERATIONS respect, either the *Diversities of Life;* or, *Death itself.*

(1.) Those which respect the *Diversities of Life,* are such as follow:—

[1.] The First Consideration shall be, of the *Just Valuation of all these Earthly Things:* which, doubtless, is such, as that the wise Christian cannot but set a low price upon them; in respect, first, of their Transitoriness; secondly, of their Insufficiency of Satisfaction; thirdly, the Danger of their Fruition.

(a.) At the best, they are but Glassy Stuff; which, the finer it is, is so much more brittle: yea, what other, than those gay bubbles, which children are wont to raise from the mixed soap and spittle of their walnut-shell; which seem to represent pleasing colours, but, in their flying up, instantly vanish? There is no remedy: either they must leave us, or we must leave them.

Well may we say that of the Psalmist, which Campian was reported to have often in his mouth; *My soul is continually in my hands:* and who knows, whether it will not expire, in our next breathing? How many have shut their eyes in a healthful sleep,

who have waked in another world! we give too large scope to our account, while we reckon seven years for a Life: a shorter time will serve; while we find the revolution of less than half those years, to have dispatched five Cæsars and five Popes *. Nay, who can assure himself of the next moment? It is our great weakness, if we do not look upon every day as our last. Why should we think ourselves in a better condition, than the Chosen Vessel, who deeply protested to *die daily?* 1 Cor. xv. 31. What a poor complaint was that of the great conqueror of the Jews, Titus Vespasian; who, putting his head out of his sick litter, querulously accused heaven, that he must die, and had not deserved it! when he might have found it guilt enough, that he was a man; and, therefore, by the very sentence of nature condemned, I know not whether to live or die. Indeed, what can we cast our eyes upon, that doth not put us in mind of our frailty? All our fellow-creatures die for us, and by us. The day dies into night. The trees, and all other plants of the earth, suffer a kind of autumnal mortality. The face of that common mother of us all, doth, at the least, in winter, resemble death. But, if the Angel of Death, as the Jews term him, shall respite and reprieve us for the time; alas, how easily may we have over-lived our comforts! If death do not snatch us away from them, how many thousand means of casualties, of enemies, may snatch them away from us! He, that was the greatest man of all the sons of the East, within a few days became a spectacle and proverb of penury; which still sticks by him, and so shall do to the world's end; "As poor as Job." The rich plain of Jordan, which, over-night, was *as the garden of the Lord*, is, in the morning, covered over with *brimstone, and salt, and burning*; Gen. xv. 10. Deut. xxix. 23. *Wilt thou cause thine eyes to fly upon that which is not?* saith wise Solomon! Prov. xxiii. 5. *for riches certainly make themselves wings: they fly away as an eagle towards heaven:* if we have wings of desire to fly after them, they are nimbler of flight to outstrip us; and leave us no less miserable in their loss, than we were eager in their pursuit.

As for Honour, what a mere shadow it is! Upon the least cloud interposed, it is gone; and leaves no mention where it was. The same sun sees Haman adored in the Persian Court, like some earthly deity; and, like some base vermin, waving upon his gibbet. Do we see the great, and glorious Cleopatra, shining in the pompous majesty of Egypt? stay but a while, and ye shall see her in the dust; and her two children, whom she proudly styled the Sun and the Moon, driven, like miserable captives, before the chariot of their conqueror. *Man, being in honour, abideth not*, saith the Psalmist, Ps. xlix. 12. He perisheth: but his greatness, as more frail than he, is oftentimes dead and buried before him; and leaves him the surviving executor of his own shame. It was easy for the captive prince, to observe in the chariot-wheel of his victor, that,

* Galba, Otho, Vitellius, Æl. Pertinax, Didius.—Anno D. 1275, 1276, Gregor. X. Innocent V. Hadrian V. John XX. vel XXI. Nicolaus III.

when one spoke rose up, another went down; and both these in so quick a motion, that it was scarce distinguished by the eye. Well, therefore, may we say of honour, as Ludovicus Vives said of Scholastical Divinity; *Cui fumus est pro fundamento* *. It is built upon smoke: how can it be kept from vanishing?

As for Beauty, what is it, but a dash of nature's tincture laid upon the skin, which is soon washed off with a little sickness? what, but a fair blossom, that drops off so soon as the fruit offers to succeed it? what, but a flower, which, with one hot sun-gleam, weltereth and falls? He, that had the choice of a thousand faces, could say, *Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vanity;* Prov. xxxi. 30.

Lastly, for Strength and Vigour of Body, if it could be maintained till our old age, alas, how soon is that upon us, ere we be aware! How doth it then shrivel our flesh, and loosen our sinews, and cripple our joints! Milo, when he looked upon his late brawny arms, and saw them now grown lank and writhled, lets fall tears; and bewrays more weakness of mind, than he had before bodily strength. But how often doth sickness prevent the debilitations of age; pulling the strongest man upon his knees; and making him confess, that *youth*, as well as *childhood*, *is vanity!* Eccl. xi. 10.

As for Pleasure, it dies in the birth; and is not therefore worthy to come into this Bill of Mortality.

Do we then, upon sad consideration, see and feel the manifest Transitoriness of Life, Riches, Honour, Beauty, Strength, Pleasure, and whatever else can be dear and precious to us in this world; and can we dote upon them so, as to be too much dejected with our parting from them? Our Saviour bids us consider the lilies of the field; Matt. vi. 28: and he, that made both, tells us, that Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these. Surely, full well are they worth our considering. But, if those beauties could be as permanent, as they are glorious, how would they carry away our hearts with them! now, their fading condition justly abates of their value. Would we not smile at the weakness of that man, that should weep and howl, for the falling of this tulip, or that rose; abandoning all comfort for the loss of that, which he knows must flourish but his month? It is for children, to cry for the falling of their house of cards; or the miscarriage of that painted gewgaw, which the next shower would have defaced: wise Christians know how to apprize good things according to their continuance; and can therefore set their hearts only upon the invisible comforts of a better life, as knowing that *the things, which are not seen, are eternal.*

(b.) But, were these earthly things exempted from that fickleness, which the God of Nature hath condemned them unto; were they, the very memory whereof perisheth with their satiety, as lasting, as they are brittle: yet, what comfort could they yield for the soul to rest in? Alas, their Efficacy is too Short, to reach unto a True Contentation! Yea, if the best of them were perpetuated un-

* Ludo. Vives in 3 de Civit. censurâ notatus Vallosillo.

to us, upon the fairest conditions that this earth can allow, how intolerably tedious would it prove in the fruition! Say, that God were pleased to protract my life to the length of the age of the first founders of mankind; and should, in this state of body, add hundreds of years to the days of my pilgrimage: woe is me, how weary should I be of myself, and of the world! I, that now complain of the load of seventy-one years, how should I be tired out, ere I could arrive at the age of Parr! but, before I could climb up to the third century of Johannes de Temporibus, how often should I call for death; not to take up, but to take off my burden, and, with it, myself!

But, if any or all these earthly blessings could be freed from those grievances, wherewith they are commonly tempered; yet, how little satisfaction could the soul find in them! What are these outward things, but very luggage, which may load our backs, but cannot lighten our hearts? Great and wise Solomon, that had the full command of them all, cries out *Vanity of vanities:* and a greater monarch than he, shuts up the scene with, "I have been all things, and am never the better." All these are of too narrow an extent, to fill the capacious soul of man; the desires whereof are enlarged with enjoying: so as, the more it hath, the less it is satisfied. Neither, indeed, can it be otherwise: the eye and the ear are but the purveyors for the heart; if, therefore, the eye be not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear with hearing, (Eccl. i. 8.) how shall the heart say, It is enough?

Now, who would suffer himself to be too much disquieted with the loss of that, which may vex him, but cannot content him? We do justly smile at the folly of that vain lord, of whom Petrarch speaks; who, when a horse, which he dearly loved, was sick, laid that steed of his on a silken bed, with a wrought pillow under his head; and caused himself, then afflicted with the gout, to be carried on his servants' shoulders to visit that dear patient; and, upon his decease, mourned solemnly for him, as if it had been his son. We have laughed at the fashion of the girls of Holland, who, having made to themselves gay and large babies, and laid them in a curious cradle, feign them to sicken and die, and celebrate their funeral with much passion. So fond are we, if, having framed to ourselves imaginary contentments here in the world, we give way to immoderate grief in their miscarriage.

(c.) Neither are these earthly comforts more defective, in yielding full satisfaction to the soul, than Dangerous, in their Over-Dear Fruition: for too much delight in them, robs us of more solid contentments. The world is a cheating gamester; suffering us to win at the first, that at last he may go away with all. Our very table may be made our snare; and those things, which should have been for our wealth, may be unto us an occasion of falling; Ps. lxix. 22. Leo, the fourth emperor of Constantinople, delighted extremely in precious stones: with these he embellishes his crown, which, being worn close to his temples, strikes such a cold into his head, that causeth his bane. Yea, how many, with the too much love of

these outward things, have lost, not their lives only, but their souls! No man can be at once the favourite of God and the world; as that Father said truly: or, as our Saviour, in fuller terms, *No man can serve two masters, God and Mammon.* Shortly, the world may be a dangerous enemy: a sure friend, it cannot be.

If, therefore, we shall, like wise men, value things at their due prices, since we are convinced in ourselves, that all these earthly comforts are so Transitory in their Nature, so Unsatisfying in their Use, and so Dangerous in their Enjoying, how little reason have we, to be too much affected with foregoing them! Our blood is dear to us, as that, wherein our life is; yet, if we find that it is either infected or distempered, we do willingly part with it, in hope of better health: how much more, with those things, which are farther from us, and less concerning us!

[2.] The Second Consideration is, of that *All-wise Providence which ordereth all events*, both in heaven and earth; allotting to every creature his due proportion; so over-ruling all things to the best, that we could not want, if he knew it better for us to abound. This station he hath set us in, this measure he hath shared out to us, whose will is the rule of good: what we have therefore, cannot but be best for us.

The world is a large chess-board: every man hath his place assigned him: one is a King; another, a Knight; another, a Pawn; and each hath his several motion: without this variety, there could be no game played. A skilful player will not stir one of these chips, but with intention of an advantage: neither should any of his men either stand or move, if, in any other part of that chequer, it might be in more hope to win.

There is no estate in this world, which can be universally good for all. One man's meat may be another man's medicine, and a third man's poison. A Turk finds health and temper in that opium, which would put one of us into our last sleep. Should the ploughman be set to the gentleman's fare, this chicken, that partridge or pheasant, would, as over-slight food, be too soon turned over; and leave his empty stomach, to quarrel for stronger provision: beef is for his diet; and, if any sauce needs besides his hunger, garlic. Every man hath, as a body, so a mind of his own: what one loves is abhorred of another.

The great Housekeeper of the World knows how to fit every palate with that, which either is or should be agreeable to it, for salubrity, if not for pleasure. Lay before a child, a knife and a rod, and bid him take his choice, his hand will be straight upon that edge-tool, especially if it be a little gilded and glittering; but the parent knows the rod to be more safe for him, and more beneficial. We are ill-carvers for ourselves: he, that made us, knows what is fit for us; either for time, or measure: without his Providence, not a hair can fall from our heads.

We would have bodily health: I cannot blame us: what is the world to us, without it? he, whose we are, knows sickness to be for the health of the soul: whether should we, in true judgment,

desire? We wish to live: who can blame us? life is sweet: but, if our Maker have ordained, that nothing but death can render us glorious, what madness is it to stick at the condition!

Oh, our gross infidelity, if we do not believe that great Arbiter of the World, infinitely wise to know what is best for us, infinitely merciful to will what he knows best, infinitely powerful to do what he will! And, if we be thus persuaded, how can we, but, in matter of good, say with Blessed Mary, *Behold thy servant: be it unto me according to thy word?* and, in matter of evil, with good Eli, *It is the Lord, let him do what he will?*

[3.] In the Third place, it will be requisite for us, to cast our eyes upon the *Worse Condition of Others*, perhaps better deserving than ourselves: for, if we shall whine and complain of that weight, which others do run away cheerfully withal, the fault will appear to be, not in the heaviness of the load, but in the weakness of the bearer.

If I be discontented with a mean dwelling, another man lives merrily in a thatched cottage: if I dislike my plain fare, the four captive children feed fair and fat with pulse and water; Dan. i. 12, 13: if I be plundered of my rich suits, I see a more cheerful heart under a russet coat, than great princes have under purple robes: if I do gently languish upon my sick bed, I see others patient under the torments of the cholic, or stone, or strangury: if I be clapped up within four walls, I hear Petronius profess, he would rather be in prison with Cato, than at liberty with Cæsar; I hear Paul and Silas sing like nightingales in their cages: am I sad, because I am childless? I hear many a parent wish himself so: am I banished from my home? I meet with many, *of whom the world was not worthy, wandering about in sheep-skins, in goat-skins, in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of earth;* Heb. xi. 38: what am I, that I should speed better, than the miserablest of these patients? what had they done, that they should fare worse than I? If I have little, others have less: if I feel pain, some others torture: if their sufferings be just, my forbearances are merciful; my provisions, to theirs, liberal.

It is no ill counsel therefore, and not a little conducing to a contented want, that great persons should sometimes step aside into the homely cottages of the poor; and see their mean stuff, coarse fare, hard lodgings, worthless utensils, miserable shifts; and to compare it with their own delicate and nauseating superfluities. Our great and learned king Alfred was the better, all his life after, for his hidden retiredness in a poor neat-herd's cabbin; where he was sheltered, and sometimes also chidden, by that homely dame. Neither was it an ill wish of that wise man, That all great princes might first have some little taste, what it is to want; that so their own experience might render them more sensible of the complaints of others.

Man, though he be absolute in himself, and stand upon his own bottom; yet is he not a little wrought upon by examples, and comparisons with others: for, in them, he sees what he is, or may

be; since no events are so confined to some special subjects, as that they may not be incident to other men.

Merits are a poor plea, for any man's exemption; while our sinful infirmities lay us all open to the rod of divine justice: and, if these dispensations be merely out of favour, why do I rather grudge at a lesser misery, than bless God for my freedom from a greater judgment? Those, therefore, that suffer more than I, have cause of more humbling; and I, that suffer less than they, have cause of more thankfulness. Even mitigations of punishment are new mercies: so as others' torments do no other, than heighten my obligations. Let me not, therefore, repine, to be favourably miserable.

[4.] The Fourth Consideration shall be, of the *Inconveniences, which do oftentimes attend a Fulness of Estate:* such, and so many, as may well make us sit down content with a little.

(a.) Whereof, let the first be Envy; a mischief, not to be avoided of the great. This shadow follows that body, inseparably. All the curs in the street are ready to fall upon that dog, that goes away with the bone; and every man hath a cudgel to fling at a well-loaded tree: whereas a mean condition is no eye-sore to any beholder. Low shrubs are not wont to be struck with lightning; but tall oaks and cedars feel their flames. While David kept his father's sheep at home, he might sing sweetly to his harp in the fields, without any disturbance; but, when he once comes to the court, and finds applause and greatness creep upon him, now, emulation, despight, and malice, dog him close at the heels, wheresoever he goes: let him leave the court, and flee into the wilderness; there, these blood-hounds follow him, in hot suit: let him run into the land of the Philistines; there, they find him out, and chase him to Ziklag: and if, at the last, he hath climbed up to his just throne, and there hopes to breathe him after his tedious pursuit; even there, he meets with more unquietness, than in his desert; and, notwithstanding all his royalty, at last cries out, *Lord, remember David, and all his troubles;* Ps. cxxxii. 1. How many have we known, whom their wealth hath betrayed, and made innocent malefactors! who might have slept securely, upon a hard bolster; and, in a poor estate, out-lived both their judges and accusers! Besides, on even ground, a fall may be harmless; but he, that falls from on high, cannot escape bruising. He, therefore that can think the benefits of eminence can countervail the dangers which haunt greatness, let him affect to overtop others: for me, let me rather be safely low, than high with peril.

(b.) After others' envy, the next attendant upon greatness is our own Cares. How do these disquiet the beds, and sauce the tables, of the wealthy! breaking their sleeps; galling their sides; embittering their pleasures; shortening their days. How bitterly do we find the holiest men complaining of those distractions, which have attended their earthly promotions! Nazianzen* cries out of

* G. Naz. Carm. de Calam. suis.

them, as no other, than the bane of the soul: and that other Gregory, whom we are wont to call the last of the best Bishops of Rome and the first of the bad, passionately bewails this clog of his high preferment: "I confess," saith he, "that while I am outwardly advanced, I am inwardly fallen lower. This burthensome honour depresses me; and innumerable cares disquiet me, on all sides: my mind, grown almost stupid with those temporal cares which are ever barking in mine ears, is forced upon earthly things*." Thus he. There are indeed cares, which, as they may be used, may help us on towards heaven: such as Melancthon owns to his Camerarius: "My cares," saith he, "send me to my prayers, and my prayers dispel my cares †:" but those anxieties, which commonly wait upon greatness, distract the mind, and impair the body. It is an observation of the Jewish Doctors, that Joseph, the Patriarch, was of a shorter life, than the rest of his brethren; and they render this reason of it, for that his cares were as much greater, as his place was higher. It was not an unfit comparison of him‡, who resembled a coronet upon the temples, to a pail upon the head: we have seen those, who have carried full and heavy vessels on the top of their heads; but then, they have walked evenly and erect under that load: we never saw any, that could dance under such a weight: if either they bend or move vehemently, all their carriage is spilled. Earthly greatness is a nice thing; and requires so much chariness in the managing, as the contentment of it cannot requite. He is worthy of honey, that desires to lick it off from thorns. For my part, I am of the mind of him, who professed, not to care for those favours, that compelled him to lie waking.

(c.) In the next place, I see greatness not more pale and worn with cares, than swollen up and sickly with Excess. Too much oil poured in, puts out the lamp.

Superfluity is guilty of a world of diseases, which the spare diet of poverty is free from. How have we seen great men's eyes surfeited at that full table, whereof their palate could not taste; and they have risen, discontentedly glutted with the sight of that, which their stomach was incapable to receive: and when, not giving so much law to nature, as to put over their gluttonous meal, their wanton appetite charging them with a new variety of curious morsels and lavish cups, they find themselves overtaken with feverous distempers; the physician must succeed the cook, and a second sickness must cure the first.

But, alas, these bodily indispositions are nothing to those spiritual evils, which are incident into secular greatness. It is a true word of St. Ambrose§, seconded by common experience, that a high pitch of honour is seldom held up without sin: and St. Jerome tells us‖, it was a common proverb in his time, That a rich man either is wicked, or a wicked man's heir: not, but that rich Abraham

* Greg. l. vii. Epist. 12. 7. † In vitâ Melanct. ‡ Shichardus.
§ Ambros. l. iv. Epist. 29. ‖ Hieron. Ep. ad Hedibium.

may have a bosom for poor Lazarus to rest in; and many great kings have been great saints in heaven, and there is still room for many more: but that, commonly, great temptations follow great estates, and oftentimes overtake them: neither is it for nothing, that riches are, by our Blessed Saviour, styled, *The mammon of iniquity;* and wealth is, by the holy Apostle, branded with deceitfulness, 1 Tim. vi. 9: such as cheat many millions of their souls.

(d.) Add unto these, if you please, the torment of Parting with that pelf and honour, which hath so grossly bewitched us: such as may well verify that, which Lucius long since wrote* to the Bishops of France and Spain, That one hour's mischief makes us forget the pleasure of the greatest excess. I marvel not at our English Jew, of whom our story speaks, that would rather part with his teeth, than his bags: how many have we known, that have poured out their life together with their gold; as men, that would not out-live their earthen god! Yea, woe is me! how many souls have been lost, in the sin of getting, and in the quarrel of losing this *thick clay*, as the Prophet terms it!

(e.) But, lastly, that, which is yet the sorest of all the inconveniences, is the sadness of the Reckoning, which must come in, after these plentiful entertainments: for there is none of all our cares here, but must be billed up: and great accompts must have long audits. How hard a thing it is, in this case, to have an *Omnia æquè!* in the failing whereof, how is the conscience affected! I know not whether more tormented, or tormenting the miserable soul: so as the great owner is but, as witty Bromiard compares him, like a weary jade; which, all the day long, hath been labouring under the load of a great treasure, and, at night, lies down with a galled back.

By that time, therefore, we have summed up all, and find here Envy, Cares, Sicknesses both of body and soul, Torment in Parting with, and more Torment in Reckoning for these earthly greatnesses; we shall be convinced of sufficient reason, to be well apaid with their want.

[5.] Let the Fifth Consideration be, the *Benefit of Poverty:* such, and so great, as are enough to make us in love with having nothing.

(a.) For, first, what an advantage is it, to be free from those gnawing cares, which, like Tityus's vulture, feed upon the heart of the great! Here is a man, that sleeps, Ethiopian-like, with his doors open: no dangers threaten him: no fears break his rest: he starts not out of his bed, at midnight, and cries, "Thieves!" he feels no rack of ambitious thoughts: he frets not, at the disappointment of his false hopes: he cracks not his brain, with hazardous plots: he misdoubts no undermining of emulous rivals; no traps of hollow friendship; but lives securely in his homely cottage, quietly enjoying such provision, as nature and honest industry furnish him withal: for his drink, the neighbour-spring saves him the charge of his excise; and, when his better earnings have fraught

* Ep. Lucii ad Episc. Gall. et Hisp.

his trencher with a warm and pleasing morsel, and his cup with a stronger liquor, how cheerfully is he affected with that happy variety, and, in the strength of it, digests many of his thinner meals! meals, usually sauced with a healthful hunger; wherein no incocted crudities oppress nature, and cherish disease. Here are no gouts, no dropsies, no hypochondriac passions, no convulsive fits, no distempers of surfeits: but a clear and wholesome vigour of body; and an easy putting over the light tasks of digestion, to the constant advantage of health.

(b.) And, as for outward dangers, what a happy immunity doth commonly bless the poor man! How can he fear to fall, that lies flat upon the ground? The great Pope, Boniface the Seventh, when he saw many stately buildings ruined with earthquakes, is glad to raise him a little cabin of boards, in the midst of a meadow; and there finds it safest to shelter his triple crown. When great men hoist their top-sail, and launch forth into the deep, having that large clue, which they spread, exposed to all winds and weathers; the poor man sails close by the shore: and, when he foresees a storm to threaten him, puts into the next creek; and wears out, in a quiet security, that tempest, wherein he sees prouder vessels miserably tost, and, at last, fatally wrecked. This man is free from the peril of spiteful machinations: no man whets his axe to cut down a shrub; it is the large timber of the world, that hath cause to fear hewing. Neither is he less free inwardly, from the gailing strokes of a self-accusing conscience: here is no remurmuring of the heart, for guilty subornations; no checks, for the secret contrivances of public villainies; no heart-breaking for the failings of bloody designs, or late remorse for their success; but quiet and harmless thoughts, of seasonable frugality, of honest recreation, with an uninterrupted freedom of recourse to heaven.

(c.) And if, at any time, by either hostile or casual means, he be bereft of his little, he smiles in the face of a thief; and is no whit astonished, to see his thatch on a flame, as knowing how easy a supply will repair his loss. And, when he shall come to his last close, his heart is not so glued to the world, that he should be loth to part: his soul is not tied up in bags; but flies out freely, to her everlasting rest. Oh, the secret virtue and happiness of poverty; which none but the right disposed mind knows how to value! It was not for nothing, that so many great Saints have embraced it, rather than the rich proffers of the world; that so many great Princes have exchanged their thrones for quiet cells. Whoso cannot be thankful for a little, upon these conditions, I wish he may be punished with abundance.

[6.] Neither will it a little avail to the furtherance of our Contentation, to consider *How Little will Suffice Nature*; and that all the rest is but matter of opinion.

It is the Apostle's charge, *Having food and raiment, let us be therewith content;* 1 Tim. vi. 8. Indeed, what use is there, of more, than what may nourish us within, and cover us without? If that be wholesome and agreeable to our bodily disposition, whe-

ther it be fine or coarse, nature passes not: it is merely Will, that is guilty of this wanton and fastidious choice.

It is fit, that civility should make difference of clothings; and that weakness of body, or eminence of estate, should make differences of diets: else, why not russet, as well as scarlet? beef, as pheasant? The grasshopper feeds on dew, the chameleon on air: what care they for other viands?

Our books* tell us, that those anchorites of old, that went aside into wildernesses, and sustained themselves with the most spare diet, such as those deserts could afford, outlived the date of other men's lives; in whom nature is commonly stifled, with a gluttonous variety. How strong and vigorous, above their neighbour-Grecians, were the Lacedemonians held, of old; who, by the ordinance of their lawgiver, held themselves to their black broth: which when Dionysius would needs taste of, his cook truly told him, that if he would relish that fare, he must exercise strongly, as they did, and wash in Urotas! Who knows not, that our island doth not afford more able bodies, than they, that eat and drink oats? And whom have we seen more healthful and active, than the children of poor men, trained up hardly in their cottages; with fare as little, as coarse?

Do I see a poor Indian, husbanding one tree to all his household uses; finding, in that one plant, timber, thatch, meat, medicine, wine, honey, oil, sauce, drink, utensils, ships, cables, sails? and do I rove over all the latitude of nature, for contentment? Our appetite is truly unreasonable; neither will know any bounds. We begin with necessaries, as Pliny† justly observes; and, from thence, we rise to excess; punishing ourselves, with our own wild desires: whereas, if we were wise, we might find mediocrity an ease.

Either extreme is alike deadly. He, that over-afflicts his body, kills a subject; he, that pampers it, nourishes an enemy‡. Too much abstinence turns vice: and too much ingurgitation is one of the seven; and, at once, destroys both nature and grace. The best measure of having or desiring, is, not what we would, but what we ought§: neither is he rich, that hath much; but he, that desireth not much. A discreet frugality is fittest, to moderate both our wishes and expences: which if we want, we prove dangerously prodigal in both; if we have, we do happily improve our stock, to the advantage of ourselves and others.

[7.] The next inducement to Contentation, shall be the serious consideration of the miserable *Inconveniences of the Contrary Disposition.*

Discontentment is a mixture of anger and of grief; both which are

* *Paulo, primo Eremitæ, in speluncâ viventi, palma et cibum et vestimentum præbebat: quod cùm impossibile videatur, Jesum testor et Angelos, vidisse me Monachos, de quibus unus, per 30 annos clausus, hordeaceo pane et lutulentâ aquâ vixit.* Hieron. de Vitâ Pauli. *Revelatur Antonio nonagenario, de Paulo agente jam 113 annum, esse alium se sanctiorem Monachum.* Ibid.

† Plin. l. xxvi. c. 6. ‡ Hugo Instit. Monac. Reg. S. Columb.

§ Senec. Epist. 68.

wont to raise up fearful tempests in the soul. *He teareth himself in his anger*, saith Bildad, concerning that Mirror of Patience; Job xviii. 4. And, *The sorrow of the world worketh death*, saith the Chosen Vessel: so as the male-content, whether he be angry or sad, mischiefs himself both ways.

There cannot be a truer word, than that of wise Solomon, *Anger resteth in the bosom of fools;* Eccl. vii. 9. What can be more foolish, than for a man, because he thinks God hath made him miserable by crosses, to make himself more miserable by his own distempers? If the clay had sense, what a mad thing were it, for it to struggle with the potter! and if a man will spurn against strong iron pikes, what can he hope to carry away, but wounds? How witless a thing it is, for a man to torment himself, with the thoughts of those evils, that are past all remedy! What wise beholder would not have smiled with pity and scorn, to have seen great Augustus, after the defeat of some choice troops, to knock his head against the wall; and to hear him passionately cry out, "O Varus, restore me my lost legions!" Who would not have been angry with that choleric Prophet, to hear him so furiously contest with his Maker, for a withered gourd? What an affliction was it to good Jacob, more than the sterility of a beloved wife, to hear Rachel say, *Give me children, or else I die!* Gen. xxx. 1: yea, how ill did it sound in the mouth of the Father of the Faithful; *Lord God, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless!* Gen. xv. 2. Yet, thus froward and techy is nature, in the best. If we may not have all we would have, all that we have is nothing: if we be not perfectly humoured, we are wilfully unthankful: all Israel is nothing worth to Ahab, if he may not have one poor vineyard. How must this needs irritate a munificent God, to see his bounty contemned, out of a childish pettishness! How can he forbear, to take away from us his slighted mercies? How can he hold his hand, from plaguing so ungrateful disrespects of his favours?

As for that other passion of Grief, what woeful work doth it make in ungoverned minds! How many have we known, that, out of thought for unrecoverable losses, have lost themselves! how many have run from their wits! how many, from their lives! yea, how many, that, out of an impatience to stay the leisure of vengeance, have made their own hands their hasty executioners! And, even where this extremity prevails not, look about, and ye shall see men, that are not able matches to their passions, woefully macerating themselves, with their own thoughts; wearing out their tedious days, upon the rack of their own hearts; and making good that observation of the Wise Man, *By the sorrow of the heart, the spirit is broken;* Prov. xv. 13.

Now all these mischiefs might have been happily prevented, by a meek yieldance of ourselves to the hands of an all-wise and an all-merciful God; and, by an humble composure of our affections to a quiet suffering. It is in the power of patience, to calm the heart in the most blustering trials; and, when the vessel is most

tossed, yet to secure the freight; Ps. xxxvii. 7. James v. 7. This, if it do not abate of our burden, yet it adds to our strength; and wins the Father of Mercies, both to pity and retribution: whereas, murmuring Israelites can never be free from judgments; and it is a dreadful word, that God speaketh of that chosen nation, *Mine heritage is unto me as a lion in the forest: it*, still, *yelleth against me; therefore have I hated it;* Jer. xii. 8. A child, that struggles under the rod, justly doubles his stripes; and an unruly malefactor draws on, besides death, tortures.

[8.] Furthermore, it is a main help towards Contentation, to consider the *Gracious Vicissitudes of God's Dealing with us:* how he intermixes favours with his crosses; tempering our much honey, with some little gall. The best of us are but shrewd children; yet, *he chides us not always*, saith the Psalmist; Ps. ciii. 9. He smiles often, for one frown; and why should we not take one with another? It was the answer, wherewith that admirable Pattern of Patience stopped the querulous mouth of his tempting wife; *What! shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?* Job ii. 10.

It was a memorable example, which came lately to my knowledge, of a worthy Christian, who had lived to his middle age in much health and prosperity; and was now, for his two last years, miserably afflicted with the strangury: who, in the midst of his torments, could say, "O my Lord God, how gracious hast thou been unto me! thou hast given me eight and forty years of health, and now but two years of pain. Thou mightest have caused me to lie in this torture, all the days of my life; and now, thou hast carried me comfortably through the rest, and hast mercifully taken up with this last parcel of my torment. Blessed be thy name for thy mercy, in forbearing me; and for thy justice, in afflicting me." To be thankful for present blessings, is but ordinary; but, to be so thankful for mercies past, that the memory of them should be able to put over the sense of present miseries, is a high improvement of grace.

The very heathens, by the light of nature and their own experience, could observe this interchange of God's proceedings; and made some kind of use of them, accordingly. Camillus, after he had, upon ten years' siege, taken the rich city Veios, prayed that some mishap might befal himself and Rome, to temper so great a happiness *; when one would have thought the price would not countervail the labour, and the loss of time and blood: and Alexander the Great, when report was made to him of many notable victories atchieved by his armies, could say, "O Jupiter, mix some misfortune with these happy news." Lo, these men could tell, that it is neither fit nor safe, for great blessings to walk alone; but, that they must be attended with their pages, afflictions: why should not we Christians expect them with patience and thanks?

* Livius.

They say, thunder and lightning hurts not, if it be mixed with rain. In those hot countries, which lie under the scalding zone, when the first showers fall after a long drought, it is held dangerous to walk suddenly abroad; for that the earth, so moistened, sends up unwholesome steams: but, in those parts, where the rain and sunshine are usually interchanged, it is most pleasant to take the air of the earth, newly refreshed with kindly showers. Neither is it otherwise, in the course of our lives. This medley of good and evil conduces, not a little, to the health of our souls: one of them must serve to temper the other; and both of them to keep the heart in order.

Were our afflictions long, and our comforts rare and short, we had yet reason to be thankful: the least is more than God owes us: but now, when if *heaviness endure for a night, joy cometh in the morning*, and dwells with us, so that some fits of sorrow are recompensed with many months of joy; how should our hearts overflow with thankfulness, and easily digest small grievances, out of the comfortable sense of larger blessings!

But, if we shall cast up our eyes to heaven, and there behold the glorious remuneration of our sufferings, how shall we contemn the worst, that earth can do unto us! There, there is glory enough, to make us a thousand times more than amends, for all that we are capable to endure. Yea, if this earth were hell, and men devils, they could not inflict upon us those torments, which might hold any equality with the glory which shall be revealed; and, even of the worst of them, we must say, with the blessed Apostle; *Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding, eternal weight of glory;* 2 Cor. iv. 17. When the blessed proto-martyr Stephen had stedfastly fixed his eyes on heaven; and, that curtain being drawn, had seen the heavens opened, and therein the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right-hand of God; Acts vii. 56. do we think he cared ought, for the sparkling eyes, and gnashed teeth, and killing stones of the enraged multitude? O poor impotent Jews, how far was that divine soul above the reach of your malice! how did he triumph over your cruelty! how did he, by his happy evolation, make all those stones precious!

[9.] Lastly, it cannot but be a powerful motive unto Contentation, that we lay before us the notable *Examples of Men, whether worse or better than ourselves*, that have been eminent in the practice of this virtue: men, that, out of the mere strength of morality, have run away with losses and poverty, as a light burden; that, out of their free choice, have fallen upon those conditions, which we are ready to fear and shrink from.

What a shame is it for Christians, to be outstripped herein by very Pagans?

If we look upon the ancient philosophers, their low valuation of these outward things, and their willing abdication of those comforts wherewith others were too much affected, made them admired of the multitude. Here do I see a cynic housed in his tub, scorn-

ing all wealth and state; and making still even, with his victuals and the day *: who, when he was invited to supper to one of Alexander's great lords, could say, "I would rather lick salt at Athens, than feast with Craterus." Here I meet with him, whom their oracle styled the wisest of men, walking bare-foot in a patched, thread-bare cloak; contemning honours, and all earthly things: and, when that garment would hang no longer on his back, I can hear him say, "I would have bought a cloak, if I had had money:" "After which word," saith Seneca, "whosoever offered to give, came too late:" Apollodorus, amongst the rest, sends him a rich mantle, towards his end: and is refused: with what patience, doth this man bear the loud scoldings of his Xantippe; making no other of them, than the creaking of a cart-wheel! with what brave resolution, doth he repel the proffers of Archelaus; telling him how cheap the market afforded meal at Athens, and the fountains water! Here I meet with a Zeno, formerly rich in his traffic for purple, now impoverished by an ill sea-voyage; and can hear him say, "I sailed best, when I shipwrecked." Here I see an Anstippus, drowning his gold in the sea, that it might not drown him. Here I can hear a Democritus, or Cleanthes, when he was asked how a man should be rich, answer, "If he be poor in desires." What should I speak of those Indian Sophists, that took their name from their nakedness; whom we hear to say †, "The sky is our house, and the earth our bed: we care not for gold: we contemn death?" One of them can tell Onesicritus, "As the mother is to the child, so is the earth to me: the mother gives milk to her infant; so doth the earth yield all necessaries to me." And, when gold was offered to him, by that great conqueror, "Persuade," said he, "if thou canst, these birds, to take thy silver and gold, that they may sing the sweeter; and, if thou canst not do that, wouldst thou have me worse than them?" Adding, moreover, in a strong discourse, "natural hunger, when we have taken food, ceaseth; and, if the mind of man did also naturally desire gold, so soon as he hath received that which he wished, the desire and appetite of it would presently cease: but, so far is it from this satiety, that the more it hath, the more it doth, without any intermission, long for more; because this desire proceeds not from any motion of nature; but only out of the wantonness of man's own will, to which no bounds can be set." Blush, O Christian Soul, whosoever thou art that readest these lines, to hear such words falling from heathen lips; when thou seest those, that profess godliness, dote upon these worthless metals, and transported with the affection and cares of these earthly provisions.

If, from these patterns of men that should be below ourselves, we look up to the more noble precedents of Prophets and Apostles, lo, there, we find Elijah, fed by ravens; Elisha, boarding with his poor Sareptan hostess; a hundred prophets, fed by fifty in a cave, with bread and water; 1 Kings xviii. 13. the sons of

* ἡμερόβιος. † *Inter Opera Ambrosii, De Moribus Brachmannorum.*

the prophets, for the enlarging of their over-strait lodgings, hard at work: they are their own carpenters, but their tools are borrowed; 2 Kings vi. 2—5. There, we shall find a few barley loaves and little fishes, the household provision of our Saviour's train. Yea, there, we find the most glorious Apostle, the great Doctor of the Gentiles, employing his hands to feed his belly; busily stitching of skins for his tent-work.

Yea, what do we look at any or all of these, when we see the Son of God, the God of all the World, in the form of a servant? Not a cratch to cradle him in, not a grave to bury him in, was his own: and he, that could command heaven and earth, can say, *The foxes have holes, and the birds have nests; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head;* Matt. viii. 20.

Who now can complain of want, when he hears his Lord and Saviour, but thus provided for? He could have brought down with him a celestial house, and have pitched it here below, too glorious for earthen eyes to have looked upon: he could have commanded all the precious things, that lie shrouded in the bowels of the earth, to have made up a majestical palace for him, to the dazzling of the eyes of all beholders: he could have taken up the stateliest court, that any earthly monarch possessed, for his peculiar habitation: But his straitness was spiritual and heavenly: and he, that owned all, would have nothing; that he might sanctify want unto us; and that he might teach us, by his blessed example, to sit down contented with any thing, with nothing.

By that time, therefore, we have laid all these things together, and have seriously considered of the Mean Valuation of all these Earthly Things, for their Transitoriness, Unsatisfaction, Danger; of the over-ruling Providence of the Almighty, who most wisely, justly, mercifully disposeth of us, and all events that befal us; of the worse Condition of many thousand Others; of the great Inconveniences that attend Great and Full Estates; of the secret Benefits of Poverty; of the Smallness of that Pittance that may Suffice Nature; of the Miseries that wait upon Discontentment; of the merciful Vicissitudes of Favours, wherewith God pleaseth to interchange our Sufferings; and, lastly, the great Examples of those, as well without as within the bosom of the Church, that have gone before us, and led us the way to Contentation: our judgment cannot chuse, but be sufficiently convinced, that there is abundant reason to win our hearts, to a quiet and contented entertainment of want, and all other outward afflictions.

(2.) But all these intervenient miseries are slight, in comparison of the last and utmost of evils, *Death*. Many a one grapples cheerfully with these trivial afflictions, who yet looks pale and trembles at the King of Fear. His very name hath terror in it; but his looks more. The courageous champion of Christ, the blessed Apostle, and, with him, every faithful soul, makes his challenge universal, to whatsoever estate he is in: to the estate of Death, therefore, no less than the afflictive incidents of life. When, therefore, this ghastly giant shall stalk forth, and bid defiance to the

whole host of Israel; and when the timorous unbelievers shall run away at the sight of him, and endeavour to hide their heads from his presence; the good soul, armed, not with the unmeet and cumbersome harness of flesh and blood, but with the sure though invisible, armour of God, dares come forth to meet him; and, in the name of the Lord of Hosts, both bids him battle, and foils him in the combat; and now, having laid him on the ground, can triumphingly say, *O Death, where is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy victory?*

[1.] Five smooth pebbles there are, which if we carry in our scrip, we shall be able to Quell, not only the Power of Death, but the Terror too.

(a.) Whereof the first is, a sure apprehension of both the unavoidable Necessity and certain Benefit of Death: a Necessity, grounded upon the just and eternal decree of heaven. *It is appointed to* all *men, once to die*; Heb. ix. 27: and what a madness were it, for a man to think of an exemption from the common condition of mankind! Mortality is, as it were, essential to our nature: neither could we have had our souls, but upon the terms of a re-delivery, when they shall be called for. If the holiest saints or the greatest monarchs sped otherwise, we might have some colour of repining: now, grieve if thou wilt, that thou art a man; grieve not, that, being man, thou must die. Neither is the Benefit inferior to the necessity. Lo here the remedy of all our cares, the physic for all our maladies, the rescue from all our fears and dangers; earnestly sued for by the painful, dearly welcome to the distressed: yea, lo here the cherub, that keeps the gate of paradise: there is no entrance, but under his hand: in vain do we hope to pass to the glory of heaven, any other way, than through the gates of death.

(b.) The second is, the Conscience of a Well-led Life. Guiltiness will make any man cowardly, unable to look danger in the face; much more, death: whereas, the innocent is bold as a lion. What a difference therefore there is, betwixt a martyr and a malefactor! This latter knows he hath done ill; and, therefore, if he can take his death but patiently, it is well: the former knows he hath done well; and, therefore, takes his death not patiently only, but cheerfully.

(c.) But, because no mortal man can have so innocently led his life, but that he shall have passed many offences against his most holy and righteous God; here must be, thirdly, a Final Peace firmly made betwixt God and the Soul. Two powerful agents must mediate in it; a lively faith and a serious repentance: for those sins can never appear against us, that are washed off with our tears; and, *being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ*; Rom. v. 1. Now, if we have made the judge our friend, what can the sergeant do?

(d.) The fourth is, the Power and Efficacy of Christ's Death, applied to the soul. Wherefore died he, but that we might live?

Wherefore would he, who is the Lord of Life, die, but to sanctify, season, and sweeten death to us? Who would go any other way, than his Saviour went before him? Who can fear that enemy, whom his Redeemer hath conquered for him? Who can run away from that serpent, whose sting is pulled out? O Death, my Saviour hath been thy death; and, therefore, thou canst not be mine.

(e.) The fifth is, the comfortable Expectation and Assurance of a certain Resurrection and an immediate Glory. I do but lay me down to my rest: I shall sleep quietly, and rise gloriously. My soul, in the mean time, no sooner leaves my body, than it enjoys God. It did lately, through my bodily eyes, see my sad friends, that bid me farewell with their tears: now, it hath the bliss-making vision of God. I am no sooner launched forth, than I am at the haven, where I would be. Here is that, which were able to make amends for a thousand deaths; a glory, infinite, eternal, incomprehensible.

This spiritual ammunition shall sufficiently furnish the soul, for her encounter with her last enemy: so as, she shall not only endure, but long for this combat; and say, with the Chosen Vessel, *I desire to depart, and to be with Christ*; Phil. i. 23.

[2.] Now, for that long conversation causeth entireness; and the parting of old friends and partners (such the soul and body are) cannot but be grievous, although there were no actual pain in the dissolution: it will be requisite for us, seriously to consider the State of this Conjunction; and to enquire, what good offices the one of them doth to the other, in their continued union, for which they should be so loth to part.

And here we shall find, that those two, however united to make up one person; yet, as it falls out in cross matches, they are in continual domestic jars one with the other, and entertain a secret familiar kind of hostility betwixt themselves: *For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other*; Gal. v. 17. One says well, that if the body should implead the soul, it might bring many foul impeachments against it; and sue it, for many great injuries done to that earthly part: and the soul, again, hath no fewer quarrels against the body: betwixt them both, there are many brawls, no agreement.

Our Schools have reckoned up, therefore, Eight main Incommodities, which the soul hath cause to complain of, in her conjunction with the body.

(a.) Whereof the first is, the Defilement of Original Sin, wherewith the soul is not tainted, as it proceeds, alone, from the pure hands of its Creator; but, as it makes up a part of a son of Adam, who brought this guilt upon human nature: so as now, this composition, which we call man, is corrupt. *Who can bring a clean thing out of that, which is unclean?* saith Job.

(b.) The second is, a Proneness to Sin, which, but by the meet-

ing of these partners had never been. The soul, if single, would have been innocent: thus matched, what evil is it not apt to entertain! An ill consort is enough to poison the best disposition.

(c.) The Difficulty of Doing Well, is the third: for, how averse are we, by this conjunction, from any thing that is good! This clog hinders us from walking roundly in the ways of God. *The good, that I would do, I do not:* saith the Chosen Vessel; Rom. vii. 19.

(d.) The fourth is, the Dulness of our Understanding, and the dimness of our mental eyes, especially in the things pertaining unto God; which now we are forced to behold through the vail of flesh. If, therefore, we misknow, the fault is in the mean, through which we do imperfectly discover them.

(e.) The fifth is, a perpetual Impugnation and Self-conflict; either part labouring to oppose and vanquish the other. This field is fought in every man's bosom, without any possibility of peace or truce, till the last moment of dissolution.

(f.) The sixth is, the racking Solicitude of Cares, which continually distract the soul; not suffering it to rest at ease, while it carries this flesh about it.

(g.) The seventh is, the Multiplicity of Passions which daily bluster within us, and raise up continual tempest in our lives; disquieting our peace, and threatening our ruin.

(h.) The eighth is, the Retardation of our Glory: for, *flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God:* we must lay down our load, if we would enter into heaven. The seed cannot fructify, unless it die. I cannot blame nature, if it could wish not to be *unclothed*, but to be *clothed upon;* 2 Cor. v. 4: but so hath the Eternal Wisdom ordered, that we should first lay down, ere we can take up; and be divested of earth, ere we can partake of heaven.

Now then, since so many and great discommodities do so unavoidably accompany this match of soul and body, and all of them cease instantly in the act of their dissolution, what reason have we, to be too deeply affected with their parting? Yea, how should we rather rejoice, that the hour is come, wherein we shall be quit both of the guilt and temptations of sin; wherein the clog shall be taken away from our heels, and the vail from our eyes; wherein no intestine wars shall threaten us, no cares shall disquiet us, no passions shall torment us; and, lastly, wherein we may take the free possession of that glory, which we have hitherto looked at only afar off, from the top of our Pisgah!

SECT. 2.

Holy Dispositions for Contentment.

(1.) *Humility:*—(2.) *Self-Resignation:*—(3.) *True Inward Riches.*

HITHERTO we have dwelt in those powerful considerations, which may work us to a quiet contentment with whatsoever adverse

estate, whether of life or death: after which, we address ourselves to those meet DISPOSITIONS, which shall render us fully capable of this blessed Contentation; and shall make all these Considerations effectual to that happy purpose.

(1.) Whereof the first is true *Humility;* under-valuing ourselves, and setting a high rate upon every mercy that we receive: for, if a man have attained unto this, that he thinks every thing too good for him, and himself less than the least blessing, and worthy of the heaviest judgment; he cannot but sit down thankful for small favours, and meekly content with mean afflictions. As, contrarily, the proud man stands upon points with his Maker; makes God his debtor; looks disdainfully at small blessings, as if he said, "What, no more?" and looks angrily at the least crosses, as if he said, "Why thus much?"

The Father of the Faithful hath practically taught us this lesson of humility; who comes to God with dust and ashes in his mouth; Gen. xviii. 27. And the Jewish Doctors tell * us truly, that, in every disciple of Abraham, there must be three things: a good eye, a meek spirit, and an humble soul. His grandchild Jacob, the father of every true Israelite, had well taken it out; while he can say to his God, *I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast shewed unto thy servant;* Gen. xxxii. 10.

And, indeed, in whomsoever it be, the best measure of grace is humility: for, the more grace still, the greater humility; and, no humility, no grace. Solomon observed of old, and St. James took it from him, that *God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble;* Prov. iii. 34. James iv. 6: so as he, that is not humble, is not so much as capable of grace; and he, that is truly humble, is a fit subject for all graces, and, amongst the rest, for the grace of Contentation.

Give me a man therefore, that is vile in his own eyes; that is sensible of his own wretchedness; that knows what it is to sin, and what belongs to that sin whereof he is guilty: this man shall think it a mercy, that he is any where out of hell; shall account all the evils that he is free from, so many new favours; shall reckon easy corrections amongst his blessings; and shall esteem any blessing infinitely obliging.

Whereas, contrarily, the proud beggar is ready to throw God's alms at his head; and swells at every lash, that he receives from the divine hand.

Not without great cause, therefore, doth the Royal Preacher oppose *the patient in spirit*, to *the proud in spirit;* Eccl. vii. 8: for the proud man can no more be patient, than the patient can be discontent with whatsoever hand of his God. Every toy puts the proud man beside his patience: if but a fly be found in Pharaoh's cup, he is straight in rage, as the Jewish tradition lays the quarrel; and sends his butler into durance: and if the emperor

* Pirke Avoth.

do but mistake the stirrup of our countryman Pope Adrian, he shall dance attendance for his crown: if a Mardochee do but fail of a courtesy to Haman, all Jews must bleed to death: and how unquiet are our vain dames, if this curl be not set right, or that pin misplaced! But the meek spirit is incurious; and so thoroughly subacted, that he takes his load from God, as the camel from his master, upon his knees: and, for men, if they compel him to go one mile, he goes twain; if they smite him on the right cheek, he turns the other; if they sue away his coat, he parts with his cloak also; Matth. v. 39, 40, 41.

Heraclius, the emperor, when he was about to pass through the golden gate, and to ride in royal state through the streets of Jerusalem, being put in mind by Zacharias, the Bishop there, of the humble and dejected fashion, wherein his Saviour walked through those streets towards his Passion, strips off his rich robes, lays aside his crown, and, with bare head and bare feet, submissively paces the same way, that his Redeemer had carried his Cross towards his Golgotha. Every true Christian is ready to tread in the deep steps of his Saviour; as well knowing, that if he should descend to the gates of death, of the grave, of hell, he cannot be so humbled, as the Son of God was for him.

And, indeed, this, and this alone, is the true way to glory. He, that is Truth itself, hath told us, that *he, who humbles himself, shall be exalted:* and wise Solomon, *Before honour is humility;* Prov. xv. 33. The fuller treads upon that cloth, which he means to whiten: and he, that would see the stars by day, must not climb up into some high mountain, but must descend to the lower cells of the earth. Shortly, whosoever would raise up a firm building of Contentation, must be sure to lay the foundation in Humility.

(2.) Secondly, to make up a true contentment with the most adverse estate, there is required a faithful *Self-Resignation* into the hands of that God, whose we are; who, as he hath more right in us than ourselves, so he best knows what to do with us.

How graciously hath his mercy invited us to our own ease! *Be careful,* saith he, *for nothing; but, in every thing, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God;* Phil. iv. 6. We are naturally apt, in our necessities, to have recourse to greater powers than our own; even where we have no engagement of their help: how much more should we cast ourselves upon the Almighty, when he not only allows, but solicits our reliance upon him!

It was a question, that might have befitted the mouth of the best Christian, which fell from Socrates: "Since God himself is careful for thee, why art thou solicitous for thyself?" If evils were let loose upon us, so as it were possible for us to suffer any thing that God were not aware of, we might have just cause to sink under adversities; but now, that we know every dram of our affliction is weighed out to us, by that all-wise and all-merciful Providence; Oh, our infidelity, if we do make scruple of taking in the most bitter dose!

Here then is the right use of that main duty of Christianity, to live by faith. Brute creatures live by sense; mere men, by reason; Christians, by faith. *Now, faith is the substance of things hoped for; the evidence of things not seen;* Heb. xi. 1. In our extremities, we hope for God's gracious deliverance: faith gives a subsistence to that deliverance, before it be. The mercies, that God hath reserved for us, do not yet shew themselves: faith is the evidence of them, though yet unseen.

It was the motto of the learned and godly Divine, Mr. Perkins, *Fidei vita vera vita;* "The true life, is the life of faith;" a word, which that worthy servant of God did both write and live.

Neither indeed is any other life truly vital, but this: for, hereby, we enjoy God, in all whatsoever occurrences. Are we abridged of means? we feed upon the cordial promises of our God. Do we sigh and groan under varieties of grievous persecutions? out of the worst of them we can pick out comforts; while we can hear our Saviour say, *Blessed are they, which are persecuted for righteousness' sake; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven;* Matth. v. 10. Are we deserted and abandoned of friends? we see him by us, who hath said, *I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee;* Heb. xiii. 5. Do we droop under spiritual desertions? we hear the God of Truth say, *For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercy will I gather thee: in a little wrath, I hid my face from thee; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord, thy Redeemer;* Is. liv. 7, 8. Are we driven from home? *If* we *take the wings of the morning, and remain in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there also shall thy hand lead* us, *and thy right-hand shall hold* us; Ps. cxxxix. 8, 9, 10. Are we dungeoned up from the sight of the sun: *Peradventure the darkness shall cover* us; *but then shall* our *night be turned into day; yea, the darkness is no darkness with thee;* vv. 11, 12. Are we cast down upon the bed of sickness? *He, that is our God, is the God of Salvation; and, unto God the Lord belong the issues from death;* Ps. lxviii. 20.

It cannot be spoken, how injurious those men are to themselves, that will be managing their own cares; and plotting the prevention of their fears; and projecting their own, both indemnity and advantages: for, as they lay an unnecessary load upon their own shoulders, so they draw upon themselves the miseries of an unremediable disappointment. Alas, how can their weakness make good those events, which they vainly promise to themselves; or avert those judgments, they would escape; or uphold them in those evils, they must undergo? Whereas, if we put all this upon a gracious God, he contrives it with ease; looking for nothing from us, but our trust and thankfulness.

(3.) In the third place, it will be most requisite to furnish the soul with *True Inward Riches:* I mean not of mere moral virtues, which yet are truly precious when they are found in a good heart; but of a wealth as much above them, as gold is above dross; yea, as the thing, which is most precious, is above nothing.

And this shall be done, if we bring Christ home to the soul; if we can possess ourselves of him, who is God all-sufficient. For, such infinite contentment there is, in the Son of God made ours, that whosoever hath tasted of the sweetness of this comfort, is indifferent to all earthly things; and so, insensible of those extreme differences of events, wherewith others are perplexed. How can he be dejected with the want of anything, who is possessed of him, that possesseth all things? How can he be over-affected with trivial profits or pleasures, who is taken up with the God of all Comfort?

Is Christ mine, therefore? how can I fail of all contentment? How can he complain to want light, that dwells in the midst of the sun? How can he complain of thirst, out of whose belly flow *rivers of living waters?* John vii. 38. What can I wish, that my Christ is not to me? Would I have meat and drink? *My flesh is meat indeed; and my blood is drink indeed;* John vi. 55. Would I have clothing? *But, put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ,* saith the Apostle; Rom. xiii. 14. Would I have medicine? He is *the Tree of Life, the leaves whereof are for the healing of the nations;* Rev. xxii. 2. Would I have safety and protection? *He truly is my strength and my salvation: he is my defence, so as I shall not fall. In God is my health and my glory; the rock of my might; and in God is my trust;* Ps. lxii. 6, 7. Would I have direction? *I am the way, and the truth;* John xiv. 6. Would I have life? *Christ is to me to live;* Phil. i. 21. *I am the resurrection and the life;* John xi. 25. Would I have all spiritual good things? We are in Christ Jesus, *who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption;* 1 Cor. i. 30.

Oh, the happy condition of the man that is in Christ, and hath Christ in him! Shall I account him rich, that hath store of oxen, and sheep, and horses, and camels; that hath heaps of metals, and some spots of ground? and shall I not account him infinitely more rich, that owns and enjoys him, whose the earth is, and the fulness of it; whose heaven is, and the glory of it? Shall I justly account that man great, whom the king will honour and place near to himself? and shall I not esteem that man more honourable, whom the King of Heaven is pleased to admit unto such partnership of glory, as to profess, *To him, that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me in my throne; even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne;* Rev. iii. 21.

It is a true word of St. Augustin, that every soul is either Christ's Spouse, or the Devil's Harlot. Now, if we be matched to Christ, the Lord of Glory; what a blessed union is here! What can he withhold from us, that hath given us himself? I could envy the devotion of that man, though otherwise misplaced, whom St. Bernard heard to spend the night in no other words, than, *Deus meus et omnia;* "My God, and all things." Certainly, he, who hath that God, hath more than all things: he, that wants him, whatever else he seems to possess, hath less than nothing.

SECT. 3.

Holy Resolutions for Contentment. (1.) *That our present estate is best for us:*—(2.) *To abate of our Desires:*—(3.) *To digest smaller Inconveniences:*—(4.) *To be frequent and fervent in prayer.*

AFTER these serious Considerations and meet Dispositions, shall, in the last place, follow certain firm RESOLUTIONS, for the full actuating our Contentment.

(1.) And, first, we must resolve, out of the unfailable grounds of Divine Providence formerly spoken of, *That the present estate wherein we are, is certainly the best for us*; and, therefore, we must herein absolutely captivate our understanding and will, to that of the Highest.

How unmeet judges are flesh and blood, of the best fitness of a condition for us! As some palates, which are none of the wholesomest, like nothing but sweetmeats; so our nature would be fed up, with the only delicacies of pleasures and prosperity: according to the false principle of Aristippus, that he only is happy, which is delighted. But the all-wise God knows another diet, more fit for our health; and, therefore, graciously tempers our dishes, with the tart sauces of affliction. The mother of the two sons of Zebedee and her ambitious children, are all for the chief peerage in the temporal kingdom of Christ; but he calls them to a bitter cup and a bloody baptism, rather: and this was a far greater honour, than that they sued for.

There is no earthly estate absolutely good for all persons; like as no gale can serve for all passengers. In Afric, they say, the north wind brings clouds, and the south wind clears up. That plant, which was starved in one soil, in another prospers: yea, that, which in some climate is poison, proves wholesome in another. Some one man, if he had another's blessings, would run wild; and if he had some other man's crosses, would be desperate.

The infinite wisdom of the great Governor of the World allots every one his due proportion. *The fitches are not thrashed with a thrashing instrument, neither is a cart-wheel turned about upon the cummin; but the fitches are beaten out with a staff, and the cummin with a rod*, saith Isaiah; ch. xxviii. 27.

And, no otherwise, in matter of prosperity: Joseph's coat may be party-coloured; and Benjamin's mess may be five times so much as any of his brethren; Gen. xliii. 34. It is marvel if they, who did so much envy Joseph for his dream of superiority, did not also envy Benjamin for so large a service, and so rich gifts at his parting: this, it seems, gave occasion for the good Patriarch's fear, when he charged them, *See that you fall not out by the way*; Gen. xlv. 24. But, there had been no reason for so impotent an envy:

while the gift is free, and each speeds above his desert, who can have cause to repine? It is enough, that Joseph knew a just reason of so unequal a distribution, though it were hidden from themselves. The elder brother may grudge the fat calf and the prime robe to the returned unthrift; but the father knows reason to make that difference.

God is infinitely just and infinitely merciful, in dispensing both his favours and punishment. In both kinds, every man hath that, which is fittest for him; because it is that, which God's will hath designed to him; and that will is the most absolute rule of justice.

Now, if we can so frame our will to his, as to think so too, how can we be other than contented? Do we suffer? There is more intended to us, than our smart. It was a good speech of Seneca, though a heathen, (what pity it is that he was so!) "I give thanks to my infirmity, which forces me not to be able to do that, which I ought not will to do." If we lose without, so as we gain within; if, in the perishing of the outward man, the inward man be renewed (2 Cor. iv. 16.), we have no cause to complain, much to rejoice. Do I live in a mean estate? If it were better, I should be worse; more proud, more careless: and what a woeful improvement were this! What a strange creature would man be, if he were what he would wish himself! Surely, he would be wickedly pleasant, carelessly profane, vainly proud, proudly oppressive, dissolutely wanton, impetuously self-willed; and, shortly, his own idol, and his own idolater. His Maker knows how to frame him better: it is our ignorance and unthankfulness, if we submit not to his good pleasure.

To conclude, we pray every day, *Thy will be done:* what hypocrites are we, if we pray one thing, and act another! if we murmur at what we wish! All is well between heaven and us, if we can think ourselves happy to be what God will have us.

(2.) Secondly, we must resolve *To abate of our desires:* for it is the illimitedness of our ambitious and covetous thoughts, that is guilty of our unquietness.

Every man would be and have, more than he is; and is, therefore, sick of what he is not. It was a true word of Democritus, "If we desire not much, we shall think a little much:" and it is suitable to one of the rules of St. Augustin; "It is better to need less, than to have more." Paul, "the richest poor man," as Ambrose * well, could say, *As having all things, yet possessing nothing.*

It is not for a Christian, to be of the dragon's temper, which, they say, is so ever thirsty, that no water will quench his drought; and, therefore, never hath his mouth shut: nor, with the daughters of the horse-leach, to cry always, *Give, give*, Prov. xxx. 15. He must confine his desires; and that, to no over-large compass: and must say to them, as God doth to the sea, *Hitherto shalt thou*

* Ambros. de Vitiorum et Virtutum Conflictu.

come, and no further; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed; Job xxxviii. 11.

What a cumber it is, for a man to have too much! to be in the case of Surena, the Parthian lord, that could never remove his family with less than a thousand camels! What is this, but, tortoise-like, to be clogged with a weighty shell, which we cannot drag after us, but with pain? Or, like the ostrich, to be so held down with a heavy body, that we can have no use of our wings? Whereas, the nimble lark rises and mounts, with ease; and sings cheerfully, in her flight.

How many have we known, that have found too much flesh a burden! and, when they have found their blood too rank, have been glad to pay for the letting it out! It was the word of that old and famous Lord Keeper Bacon, the eminent head of a noble and witty family, *Mediocria firma.* There is neither safety, nor true pleasure, in excess. It was a wise and just answer of Zeno, the philosopher; who, reproving the superfluity of a feast, and hearing by way of defence that the maker of it was a great rich man and might well spare it, said; "If thy cook shall oversalt thy broth, and when he is chid for it, shall say, 'I have store enough of salt lying by me,' wouldest thou take this for a fair answer?"

My son, eat thou honey, saith Solomon; *because it is good;* Prov. xxiv. 13. but, to be sure, for the preventing of all immoderation, he adds soon after; *Hast thou found honey? eat so much as is sufficient for thee, lest thou be filled therewith;* Prov. xxv. 16. If our appetite carry us too far, we may easily surfeit. This, which is the emblem of pleasure, must be tasted, as Dionysius the Sophist said of old, on the tip of the finger; not to be supped up in the hollow of the hand.

It is with our desires, as it is with weak stomachs; the quantity offends, even where the food is not unwholesome: and, if heed be not taken, one bit draws on another, till nature be over-laid. Both pleasures and profits, if way be given to them, have too much power to debauch the mind, and to work it to a kind of insatiableness. There is a thirst, that is caused with drunkenness; and the wanton appetite, like as they said of Messalina, may be wearied, but cannot be satisfied. It is good therefore, to give austere repulses to the first overtures of inordinate desires; and to give strong denials to the first unruly motions of our hearts: for, St. Chrysostom, well; "Pleasure is like a dog, which, being coyed and stroked, follows us at the heels; but if rated and beaten off, is driven away from us with ease."

It is for the Christian heart, to be taken up with other desires; such as, wherein there can be no danger of immoderateness: these are the holy longings after grace and goodness. This only covetousness, this ambition, is pleasing to God, and infinitely beneficial to the soul. *Blessed are they, which hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled;* Matt. v. 6. Spiritual bless-

ings are the true riches; whereof we can never have enough. St. Ambrose * said truly, "No man is indeed wealthy, that cannot carry away what he hath with him. What is left behind, is not ours; but other men's. Contemn thou while thou art alive, that, which thou canst not enjoy, when thou art dead."

As for this earthly trash and the vain delights of the flesh, which we have so fondly doted on, we cannot carry them indeed away with us: but the sting of the guilty mis-enjoying of them, will be sure to stick by us; and, to our sorrow, attend us both in death and judgment. In sum therefore, if we would be truly contented, and happy, our hearts can never be enough enlarged, in our desires of spiritual and heavenly things; never too much contracted, in our desires of earthly.

(3.) Our third resolution must be, to inure ourselves *To digest smaller discontentments;* and, by the exercise thereof, to enable ourselves for greater: as those, that drink medicinal waters, begin first with smaller quantities; and by degrees arise, at last, to the highest of their prescribed measure: or, as the wise *Lacedemonians*, by early scourgings of their boys, inured them, in their riper years, to more painful sufferings. A strong *Milo* takes up his calf at first; and, by continual practice, is now able to carry it, when it is grown a bull.

Such is our self-love, that we affect ever to be served of the best; and that we are apt to take great exceptions at small failings. We would walk always in smooth and even paths, and would have no hindrances in our passage: but, there is no remedy; we must meet with rubs, and perhaps cross shins, and take falls too in our way. Every one is willing and desirous to enjoy, as they say the city of Rhodes doth, a perpetual sunshine: but we cannot, if we be wise, but know, that we must meet with change of weather; with rainy days, and sometimes storms and tempests. It must be our wisdom, to make provision accordingly; and, some whiles, to abide a wetting; that, if need be, we may endure a drenching also.

It was the policy of Jacob, when he was to meet with his brother Esau, whom he feared an enemy, but found a friend; to send the droves first; then, his handmaids, and their children; then, Leah, with her children; and, at last, came Joseph and Rachael; Gen. xxxii. 14, &c. and xxxiii. 5, 6, &c. as one, that would adventure the less dear, in the first place; and, if it must be, to prepare himself for his dearest loss. St. Paul's companions in his perilous sea-voyage, first, lighten the ship of less necessaries: then, they cast out the tackling; then, the wheat; and, in the last place, themselves; Acts xxvii. 18, 19. It is the use, that wise Socrates made of the sharp tongues of his cross and unquiet wives, to prepare his patience for public sufferings. Surely, he, that cannot endure a frown, will hardly take a blow; and he, that doubles under a light cross, will sink under a heavier: and, contrarily, that good martyr

* Ambros. Epist. 27.

prepares his whole body for the faggot, with burning his hand in the candle.

I remember Seneca, in one of his Epistles, rejoices much, to tell with what patient temper he took it, that, coming unexpectedly to his country-house, he found all things so discomposed, that no provision was ready for him; finding more contentment in his own quiet apprehension of these wants, than trouble in that unreadiness: and thus should we be affected, upon all occasions. Those, that promised me help, have disappointed me: that friend, on whom I relied, hath failed my trust: the sum, that I expected, comes not in at the day: my servant slackens the business enjoined him: the beast, that I esteemed highly, is lost: the vessel, in which I shipped some commodities, is wrecked: my diet and attendance must be abated: I must be dislodged of my former habitation: How do I put over these occurrences? If I can make light work of these lesser crosses, I am in a good posture to entertain greater.

To this purpose, it will be not a little expedient, to thwart our appetite, in those things, wherein we placed much delight; and to torture our curiosity, in the delay of those contentments, which we too eagerly affected. It was a noble and exemplary government of these passions, which we find in King David; who, being extremely thirsty, and longing for a speedy refreshment, could say, *Oh, that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem!* but, when he saw that water purchased with the hazard of the lives of three of his Worthies, when it was brought to him he would not drink it, but poured it out unto the Lord; 2 Sam. xxiii. 15, 16, 17. Have I a mind to some one curious dish, above the rest? I will put my knife to my throat; and not humour my palate, so far, as to taste of it. Do I receive a letter of news from a far country, over-night? it shall keep my pillow warm till the morning. Do my importunate recreations call me away? they shall, against the hair, be forcibly adjourned till a further leisure.

Out of this ground it was, that the ancient votaries observed such austerity and rigour, in their diet, clothes, lodging; as those, that knew how requisite it is, that nature should be held short of her demands, and continually exercised with denials, lest she grow too wanton and impetuous in her desires. That, which was of old given as a rule to Monastic persons, is fit to be extended to all Christians: They may not have a will of their own; but must frame themselves to such a condition and carriage, as seems best to their Superior.

If, therefore, it please my God, to send me some little comfort, I shall take that as an earnest of more: and, if he exercise me with lesser crosses, I shall take them as preparatives to greater: and endeavour to be thankful for the one, and patient in the other; and contented with God's hand, in both.

(4.) Our last resolution must be, *To be frequent and fervent in our prayers to the Father of all Mercies*, that he will be pleased to k our hearts, by the power of his Spirit, to this constant state of

Contentation; without which, we can neither consider the things that belong to our inward peace, nor dispose ourselves towards it, nor resolve ought for the effecting it; without which, all our Considerations, all our Dispositions, all our Resolutions, are vain and fruitless. Justly, therefore, doth the blessed Apostle, after his charge of avoiding all carefulness for these earthly things, enforce the necessity of our Prayers and Supplications, and making our requests known unto God; Phil. iv. 6. who both knows our need, and puts these requests into our mouths. When we have all done, they are the requests of our hearts, that must free them from cares, and frame them to a perfect contentment.

There may be a kind of dull and stupid neglect, which, possessing the soul, may make it insensible of evil events, in some natural dispositions; but a true temper of a quiet and peaceable estate of the soul, upon good grounds, can never be attained, without the inoperation of that Holy Spirit, from whom every good gift, and every perfect giving proceedeth; James i. 17.

It is here contrary to these earthly occasions: with men, he, that is ever craving, is never contented; but, with God, he cannot want contentment, that prays always.

If we be not unacquainted with ourselves, we are so conscious of our own weakness, that we know every puff of temptation is able to blow us over: they are only our prayers, that must stay us from being carried away, with the violent assaults of discontentment; under which, a praying soul can no more miscarry, than an indevout soul can enjoy safety.

PART THE SECOND.

CONTENTATION, IN KNOWING HOW TO ABOUND.

The Difficulty of Knowing how to abound: and the Ill Consequences of Not Knowing it.

LET this be enough for the remedy of those distempers which arise from an Adverse condition.

As for *PROSPERITY*, every man thinks himself wise and able enough, to know how to govern it, and himself in it. A happy estate, we imagine, will easily manage itself, without too much care. Give me but sea-room, saith the confident mariner; and let me alone, whatever tempest arise.

Surely, the great Doctor of the Gentiles had never made this holy boast of his divine skill, *I know how to abound*, if it had been so easy a matter, as the world conceives it. Mere ignorance, and want of self-experience, is guilty of this error.

Many a one abounds in wealth and honour, who abounds no less in miseries and vexation. Many a one is carried away with an unruly greatness, to the destruction of body, soul, estate. The world abounds every where, with men, that do abound; and yet, do not know how to abound: and those, especially, in three ranks; the Proud, the Covetous, the Prodigal: the Proud is thereby transported to forget God; the Covetous, his neighbour; the Prodigal, himself.

Both wealth and honour are of a Swelling nature; raising a man up, not only above others, but above himself; equalling him to the powers immortal; yea, exalting him above all that is called God. Oh, that vile dust and ashes should be raised to that height of insolence, as to hold contestation with its Maker! *Who is the Lord?* saith the king of Egypt; Exod. v. 2. *I shall be like to the Highest: I am; and there is none besides me;* saith the king of Babylon; Isa. xiv. 14. xlvii. 8. *The voice of God, and not of man*, goes down with Herod; Acts xii. 22. And how will that Spirit trample upon men, that dare vie with the Almighty! Hence are all the heavy oppressions, bloody tyrannies, imperious domineerings, scornful insultations, merciless outrages, that are so rife amongst men, even from hence, that they know not how to abound.

The Covetous man abounds with bags, and no less with sorrows; verifying the experience of wise Solomon: *There is a sore evil, which I have seen under the sun, riches kept for the owners thereof, to their hurt*; Eccl. v. 13. What he hath got with injustice, he keeps with care, leaves with grief, and reckons for with torment. I cannot better compare these money-mongers, than to bees: they are busy gatherers; but it is for themselves: their masters can have no part of their honey, till it be taken from them; and they have a sting ready for every one, that approaches their hive; and their lot, at the last, is burning. What maceration is there here, with fears and jealousies! What cruel extortion and oppression exercised upon others! and all, from no other ground, than this, that they know not how to abound!

The Prodigal feasts and sports, like an Athenian; spends, like an emperor; and is ready to say, as Heliogabalus did of old, "Those cates are best, that cost dearest *;" caring more for an empty reputation of a short gallantry, than for the comfortable subsistence of himself, his family, his posterity: like Cleopes, the vain Egyptian king, which was fain to prostitute his daughter for the finishing of his pyramid. This man lavisheth out, not his own means alone, but his poor neighbour's; running upon the score

* Ælius Lamprid.

with all trades, that concern back or belly; undoing more with his debts, than he can pleasure with his entertainments: none of all which should be done, if he knew how to abound.

Great skill, therefore, is required to the governing of a plentiful and prosperous estate; so as it may be safe and comfortable to the owner, and beneficial unto others. Every corporal may know how to order some few files; but, to marshal many troops in a regiment, many regiments in a whole body of an army, requires the skill of an experienced general. But the rules and limits of Christian Moderation, in the use of our honours, pleasures, profits, I have at large laid forth in a former Discourse. Thither I must crave leave to send the benevolent reader; beseeching God to bless unto him these and all other labours, to the happy furtherance of his grace and salvation. Amen.

THE PEACE-MAKER:

LAYING FORTH

THE RIGHT WAY OF PEACE,

IN

MATTERS OF RELIGION.

BY JOSEPH, BISHOP OF NORWICH.

I HAVE perused this Discourse, entitled "The Peace Maker:" and, observing it to be, in respect of the subject matter, pious, profitable, and very seasonable in these Distracted and Distempered Times; and, in the manner of handling it, sober, learned, and impartially judicious; I allow it to be printed and published.

JOHN DOWNAME.

TO

MY REVEREND BRETHREN

OF THE

DIOCESE OF NORWICH.

WORTHY BRETHREN:

YE cannot but have taken notice of the silence, that hath lately possessed my tongue, which was wont to be vocal enough. Besides some external reasons, it is my care and zeal of peace, that stops my mouth for the time, and bids me refrain, even from good words. In the mean while, the same dear respect to peace employs my hand; and bids it supply the place of my tongue, as that, which shall speak louder, and to more eyes, than my tongue could to ears: both of them are heartily devoted to peace, and strive whether shall more express it.

It was ever the desire of my soul, even from my first entrance upon the public service of the Church, according to my known Signature, with Noah's Dove, to have brought an Olive-branch to the tossed Ark; and God knows how sincerely I have endeavoured it: but, if my wings have been too short, and the wind too high for me, to carry it home, I must content myself with the conscience of my faithful devotions. Some little hint whereof, notwithstanding, I have thought fit to give to the world, in this present Discourse, lest I should seem to be, like itself, all pretence; and that I might, by this Essay of mine, open the way to some more able undertakers.

Now, therefore, let me recommend this subject to your seriousest thoughts; and beseech you all, in the bowels of our common Saviour, to join with me, in the zealous prosecution of what I here treat of, Peace.

It is an useful rule of our Romish Casuists, that he, who will have benefit of their large Indulgences, must porrigere manus adjutrices. *Surely, it holds much better, in the present case. Whoever will hope to reap the comfort of this incomparable blessing of Peace, must put forth his helping hand, towards the procuring of it. Oh, let not our Studies, nor Prayers, nor Tears, nor Counsels, nor Solicitations, nor Engagements, nor Endeavours be wanting to it: no; nor, if need were, our Blood. What the price of it is, since the fruition of it did not teach us, we have too well learnt in the want.*

Alas, my Brethren, we cannot help one another sufficiently to con-

dole the miseries under which we, yea this whole Church, yea this whole bleeding Monarchy, yea the whole Christian World, at this time groaneth, by reason of that woeful and deadly debate, that rageth every where. All the whole earth is on fire: the flame reacheth up to heaven, and calls for more thence. Woe is me! our very punishment is our sin. What should we do, but pour out floods of tears, towards the quenching of it; and say, with the lamenting Prophet, Oh, that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep, day and night, for the slain of the daughter of my people! *Jer.* ix. 1.

But, as Chrysostom said long ago in the like case to Innocentius, It is not wailing will serve the turn, if we do not bestir ourselves, what we may, for redress. When we see our house on fire, do we stand still and cry? do we not ring bells, and call neighbours, and bring ladders, and fetch buckets, and pour on water, and pull down reeds and rafters, and whatever may feed that flame? And why should we not do so, in this common conflagration? Oh, let every man of us put his hand to the work; and labour to withdraw that hellish fuel, which nourisheth and encreaseth this fearful combustion: and, if each man can but pull away one stick, it shall be his comfort and joy in that great day. But far, far be it from us, that any of us should mis-employ himself as an Incendiary.

*It is felony, by our municipal laws *, for a man to burn but the frame of a building intended for a house: how heinously flagitious shall the God of Heaven account it, to set on fire his complete spiritual house the Church, whereof every believer is a living stone †! Doubtless, how slight account soever the world makes of these spiritual distempers, it shall be easier in the Day of Judgment for thieves, and whoremongers, and adulterers, than for the breakers of public peace. Never was there any so fearful vengeance inflicted upon any malefactors, as upon Korah and his combination. Surely, if we consider the sin in itself, other offences had been far more heinous; but, in that it was a presumptuous mutiny, tending to the affront of allowed authority, to the violation of peace, and to the destruction of community, the earth could not stand under it: hell only is fit to receive it.*

I speak not this to intimate the least suspicion, much less accusation, of any of you, my Dear Brethren; but, by way of a tender precaution and loving cohortation, to excite you and myself to the improvement of all the powers of our souls, for the recovery and perpetuation of the Church's Peace: a duty, which both our Blessed Saviour, and his holy Apostles, hath so vehemently urged, as if there were no life of Christianity without it; Matt. x. 13. Mark ix. 50. Luke x. 6. John xiv. 27. Rom. iii. 17. xiv. 19. 1 Cor. vii. 17.

* 37 Hen. VIII. 6.

† *Inexpiabilis et gravis culpa discordiæ, nec passione purgatur.* Cypr. de Simplicit. Prælatorum. *Possidere non potest indumentum Christi, qui scindit et dividit Ecclesiam Christi.* Ibid. Cypr.

2 Cor. xiii. 11. Gal. v. 22. Eph. iv. 3. 1 Thes. v. 13. 2 Tim. ii. 22. Heb. xii. 14. James iii. 18. 1 Pet. iii. 11.

As we honour the God of Love and Peace, whom we serve; as we love the Prince of Peace, in whom we believe; as we tender the success of the Gospel of Peace, which we preach; as we wish and hope for the comfort of the peace of God in our own bosoms: let us seek peace, where it is missing; let us follow after it, when it flies from us; let us never leave the chase, by importuning God and men, till we overtake it, till we re-enjoy it, and all the blessings that accompany it: which shall be ever the prayer and endeavour of

Your faithful

and loving

Fellow-Labourer,

JOSEPH NORWICH.

THE

PEACE-MAKER.

CHAP I.

INTRODUCTORY.

SECT. 1.

The Difference of Truths: and the Importance of those, which concern Matter of Religion.

THERE is as much difference in the value of truths, as there is of coins: whereof one piece is but a farthing, another no less than a pound; yet both current, and in their kind useful.

Theological truths are so much more precious than all others, by how much divine knowledge is more excellent than all human arts and sciences whatsoever.

Amongst divine truths, those are most important, which are requisite to the regulating of religion, both in the theory and practice thereof. And, even amongst these, there is just place for Canus's distinction, betwixt Truths of Christian Doctrine, and Truths of Catholic Faith: there being, in the former, great latitude and variety; in the latter, more narrowness and restraint.

As there is no truth therefore, which may be a meet subject of our contempt or opposition: so there are some truths, which may be too much striven for; others, never enough. Of which last kind are those, which do mainly concern the grounds of our Christian Religion: for, if the soul be the better part, if not the whole, of man; and religion be that, which is of highest concernment to the everlasting good of the soul; it must needs follow, that the soul can never be better taken up, than with the care of that religion, which only can render it eternally happy.

If therefore the Christian Cicero, Lactantius, went too far in making religion the form of man, instead of the reasonable soul wherewith he is animated; certainly, we cannot err, in making the investigation and finding out the true religion, the highest improvement, of which the reasonable soul can be capable.

There is no man then, except perhaps some lawless atheist, which doth not busy himself in this necessary search; and find his heart unquiet, till he have attained such a resolution, in the choice and assurance of his religion, wherein he may find rest to his soul: like as the dove could find no stay for the sole of her feet upon the waves; but flutters up and down, till she may settle in the ark; Gen. viii. 9.

Neither is it more natural to us, to seek for and to pitch upon that religion, which we apprehend true; than it is to desire, that that, which we have conceived to be the only truth, should be communicated to others; and either to pity or deeply censure those, who come not home to us in the same belief.

Hence, are those many and miserable distractions, which we find all the world over. Hence, are churches, congregations, families, persons torn asunder, one from another: so as, the whole earth is strewed over, with the woeful monuments of our discerptions: here lies a leg; there, an arm: here, a hand; there, a foot: here, a head; there, a heart: yea, in a more accurate subdivision, here, lies a finger disjoined from the hand, a toe from the foot; yea, more, a joint severed from either. How happy were it, if that powerful Spirit, that breathed upon the dry scattered bones in Ezekiel's vision, might once blow upon these dismembered limbs, that they might yet come together and live! Ezek. xxxvii. 7.

In the mean time, it is the duty of every son of peace, to endeavour, what in him lies, to reduce all the members of God's Church upon earth to a blessed unity, both in judgment and affections. This is the holy labour, which I have here undertaken. The God of Peace put life into it; and make it as effectual, as it is heartily meant, to the good of every Christian soul!

SECT. 2.

What Differences of Judgment make a Different Religion.

It is not to be expected, but that, as every man hath a soul of his own, so he should have several conceits and opinions; as concerning whatsoever subject, so especially in matter of religion: wherein, sense and reason have less stroke, than in all secular objects: neither is it possible, that all men's minds should be confined to the same passages or issues of ratiocination. That active spirit, wherewith we are informed, will take scope to itself, of moving and alighting, where it likes.

But it is not the varieties or differences of petty and unimportant opinions, how many soever, that can make several religions. These may trouble the spring; but cannot divert the channel. They must be quarrels of a higher nature, that can pretend reason to make an universal breach in God's Church, and to warrant the denomination of a different religion. Like as it is in the family: there may be some small household jars upon trivial occasions, betwixt the dearest

yoke-fellows: yet these break not the domestic peace; much less, can be the ground of a divorce.

To speak plainly and fully. The Church, and the religion which constitutes it, is God's building: the building of God must needs be perfect: a perfect building must have a foundation, walls, roof: a foundation, to uphold the walls; and walls, to uphold the roof; and a roof, laid upon those walls. None of these can be wanting, in a complete fabric: for, what is a foundation without walls? or, to what purpose were a roof set upon a mere groundsel? When all these are fully made up, the frame is entire: and now, fit for furniture and ornament.

But, if some curious purchaser shall come afterwards, and say, "This roof is too high; lay it somewhat flatter:" or, "These spars or studs stand too thin; put in more:" or, "This window is not uniform; set it somewhat lower:" will any wise man say, when all this is accordingly done, it is not the same house it was? Small alterations, whether in matter or form, cannot reach so far, as to forfeit the name of an old edifice, or to impose the title of a new: but, if the roof be taken away, the walls demolished, the foundation digged up, and the same materials employed upon another structure, as near as is possible to the former model, every beholder will justly call this house new.

The similitude applies itself. Little differences of opinion in immaterial points, are not of power to make another religion: but, if there be any, who, having pulled down the frame of orthodox belief, will be laying, instead thereof, a foundation of false principles, and raise upon them the walls of heretical doctrine; this man is of a religion, not more different, than abominable. *O my soul, come not thou into* the *secret* of any such men: *unto their assembly, mine honour be not thou united;* Gen. xlix. 6.

SECT. 3.

Of the Fundamental Points of Religion.

But, because this matter is of so high concernment, that it imports no less than our souls are worth; let us yet look more deeply into, and enquire punctually, What it is, that makes one or a several Church.

And we shall find That to be one Church, wherein is an agreement in all the essentials of religion. And those, the great Doctor of the Gentiles hath determined to be, *One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism:* that is, a subjection to one Lord, prescribed in the Decalogue; a belief of the same Articles, set down in the Creed; a joint use and celebration of the Holy Sacraments, the initiatory whereof is Baptism: so as, where there is an acknowledgment of the same Living Lord, the God of Heaven, whom we profess to depend upon for all things, to serve and obey according to his com-

mandments, to invoke in our prayers for the supply of all our necessities; where there is a profession of the same faith in all the main points of Christian doctrine, summed up in that Symbol of the holy Apostles; where there is a communion in the same Blessed Sacraments, instituted by our Lord Jesus; there is one and the same Church of Christ, however far disterminate in places, however segregated and infinitely severalized in persons, however differing in rites and circumstances of worship, however squaring in by-opinion.

This is a truth, which is, with much consent and serious vehemence, inculcated by all our orthodox Divines; amongst whom, none hath so fully cleared the point, as the late honour of our Schools, the learned Bishop Davenant, in that last golden Tractate * which he wrote, now breathing towards the gates of his heaven, his pious and pithy Exhortation of the Evangelical Churches to a happy Peace: wherein the Fundamentals of our Faith are so evidently laid open, that it is not hard to judge by that unfailing rule, whom we may and must admit to the communion of Christ's Church, and whom we ought to exclude from that holy society.

Doubtless, there is the same consideration of a Christian, and of a Church: for, what is a Church, but an assembly of many true believing Christians? and, what is a Christian, but an abridgment of the Church; or a Church contracted into one bosom? The number makes no difference in the essence.

Now, what is a Christian, but a living stone, laid upon the foundation of God's spiritual building? And this foundation is either personal or doctrinal. The personal is Christ, the Son of the Ever-Living God: so the great and wise master-builder tells us; *Other foundation can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ;* 1 Cor. iii. 11. The doctrinal is the whole truth of God revealed in the Holy Scriptures; *The foundation of the prophets and apostles;* Eph. ii. 20: every line of whose divine writings is, in respect of the authority of the Revealer, a several stone in this precious foundation; though, in respect of use, those only truths, thence selected, without whose express and explicit knowledge no man can be saved, are justly styled Fundamental. The sum whereof, is the Rule of Belief, the Rule of Life, and the Rule of Devotion: the Rule of Belief † gathered up into the known Articles of our Creed; the Rule of Life comprehended in the Ten Commandments; the Rule of Devotion, in the prescription of Prayer and Sacraments. What person soever then, after his due matriculation into God's Church, professeth to be built upon Christ the true corner-stone, to receive and embrace the whole Truth of God delivered in the sacred monuments of the Prophets and Apostles, to believe all the Articles of the Christian Faith, to yield himself to the guidance of that Royal

* Jo. Davenant, Ad Pacem Ecclesiæ Adhortatio.

† *Symbolum est omnium credendorum ad salutem spectantium compendiosa collectio.* Gers. Tract. 1. de Artic. Fidei.

Law, to call upon the only true God in and through Christ, to communicate in the same Holy Sacraments instituted by the Lord of Life, cannot but be acknowledged a true Christian, and worthy of our free and entire communion.

And if more do so, to the making up of a whole assembly, orderly congregated under lawful pastors, what can debar them of the title and privilege of a true Christian Church?

SECT. 4.

The Injurious Uncharitableness of the Romish Church, in excluding Christian Churches, and condemning their Professors.

It is, therefore, a high degree of injurious uncharitableness and presumption in whomsoever, to shut those out from the Church of Christ, who can truly plead all these just claims, for their undoubted interest in that Holy Society.

Amongst whom, we can confidently say, all the water of Tiber cannot wash the Church of Rome from the heinous guilt of this double crime; whose unjust and imperious censure hath cruelly cashiered all the Churches upon earth, save those of her own correspondence, from the challenge and benefit of Catholic Communion.

In which number, first steps forth the GREEK CHURCH; and doth vehemently, at the bar of heaven, implead her Latin corrival of extreme insolence and injustice *, in excluding her from the line of this sacred communication; being yet no whit less large, noble, ancient, orthodox than herself.

And, indeed, the plaint will be found most just: for, if we examine the original and proceedings of this quarrel, we shall find the ground of it ambition, the pretence heresy.

The heresy charged upon that Church is concerning the Procession of the Holy Ghost, which procession they hold to be from the Father, but acknowledge not from the Son. The subject is of a high nature. Every notion, that concerns the Infinite Deity, is worthy to be important. So as the sound of the words justly seems heinous to a Christian ear: but if the opinion be taken whole, and with the favour of their limits and explication †, much of the odious-

* *Nilus,* Orat. de Causis Dissentionum Ecclesiæ, *imputat omnes divisiones orbis Christiani Ecclesiæ Romanæ; quòd præsumpserit absque Græcis de rebus fidei definire, ita ut omnes contrà sentientes Anathemati subjecerit.*

† Damas. *Spiritum Sanctum esse per Filium sed non à Filio.* Lib. de Orthod. Fide, c. xi.—Κυραλλὸς Παλριαρ. Κονσαντ. Ὁμολογία Πίστεως. Πνεῦμα Ἅγιον ἐκ τοῦ Πατρὸς δι' Υἱοῦ προσερχόμενον, Πατρὶ καὶ Υἱῷ ὁμοούσιον.—*Non ex Filio, sed Spiritum Filii esse dicimus, et Patris per Filium.* Damas. l. i. Fid. Orth.—*Sanè sciendum est, quòd licet in præsenti articulo à nobis Græci verbo discordent, tamen sensu non differunt.* Mag. Sent. l. i. c. 11.—*An verò quia Spiritus est Filii quoque Spiritus, ideo Spiritus à Filio quoque procedat; statuunt illi, qui planè percipiunt, quid sit in divinis procedere: ego, cum antiquis patribus, fateor, me quid sint istæ processiones in divinis ignorare.* Marc. Ant. de Dom. de Rep. Eccles. l. vii. c. 10.

ness will be abated; and it will be found rather erroneous than heretical, and more full of scandal than of danger. Did they deny the Holy Ghost to be the Third Person in the Glorious Trinity, or that he is True God, of the same substance with the Father and the Son, they were worthy of our utmost defiance: but now, while granting all these, they stick upon the only terms of the immediate principle of his divine procession, the quarrel is rather Scholastical than Christian; and hath in it more subtlety than use. Yea, that it may appear this controversy hath in it more verbality than matter, they do willingly grant and profess, that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of the Son, no less than of the Father, though not proceeding from the Son: a metaphysical nicety, not worthy to mar the peace of God's Church, or to make a defendant heretical: so as those three Plenary Councils, as Cardinal Bellarmin styles them, viz. that of Lateran, that of Lyons, that of Florence, by which the Greek Church is upon this point condemned of heresy, and shut out from the claim of catholicism, have justly run themselves upon the just censure of foul uncharitableness.

As for those other points of difference about Purgatory and Primacy, heretofore agitated betwixt them, that Eastern Church is so far from just blame, that it clearly hath the advantage.

Shortly, in all the main points of Christian Religion, if the Greek Church profess that doctrine, which their late learned and religious Patriarch hath in her name published to the world, she may well merit the claim of a sisterhood to the most pure Church under heaven: neither was *Græca fides*, in another sense of old, more infamous, than the Faith of the Greek Church is now worthily honoured through the Christian world. And, for us in this island, as in our first conversion to Christianity we held correspondence with the Greek Church, and continued it so till about seven hundred years after Christ's Nativity, to the great regret of the Roman; so still the entireness of their agreement with us in this worthy Confession of their Faith, challengeth from us the dearest of all Christian respects to them.

In the next place, the PROTESTANT or EVANGELICAL CHURCHES of our European world, do justly cry out of the high injustice of Rome, in excluding them from the Communion of the truly Catholic Church of Christ. What a presumptuous violence is this! What a proud uncharitableness! How often, and how sadly, have we appealed to the God of Heaven, to judge between us!

What is, what can there be required, to the entire being of a Christian Church, which is not to be found eminently conspicuous in these of ours? Here is One Lord, that sways us by the sceptre of his Law and Gospel; One Faith, which was once delivered to the Saints, without diminution, without adulteration; One Baptism, the common laver of our regeneration; One Spiritual Banquet of Heavenly Manna, whereby our souls are fed to eternal life; One Rule of our Christian Devotion: shortly, here is a sweet communion of the members with their Head, Christ; and of the members with themselves.

Let them say then, what is wanting to us, even in their worst prejudice; save that we are not theirs. And the fault of that is their own. They have both gone from themselves and abandoned us: had they continued still what they once were, they had been ours, we had been theirs, both had been Christ's. If they have departed from Christ and themselves, we can bewail them; we dare not go along with them. Thus long have we differed; yet could they never name any one article of all the anciently approved Creeds, which we have denied; any one fundamental error, which we have maintained: neither shall ever be able to do it. Before God, and angels, and men, the wrong lies at their door, who have laid more and other foundations, than God ever intended for the raising up of his Church.

Envy itself cannot accuse us of any positive error, that can so much as strike at the true foundation, much less raze it. We are only charged with negatives; in that we cannot admit those novel impositions, which they would injuriously obtrude upon God's Church, as matters of faith; in that we cannot allow every determination of the now-Roman Church to be oracular and fundamental: a resolution, which we dare not forsake; lest our God should forsake us, as he hath them.

So then, let them prove that their Twelve Tridentine Articles, which they would force * upon the Church of God, are part of the truth delivered once to the Saints, or that there may be now any new faith, or that it is in the power of the Church of Rome to determine that her decisions shall pass for matter of faith; and we shall then cry her up as only Catholic, and confess ourselves justly branded with the note of Heretical pravity. In the mean time, woe be to them, by whom the offence of this division cometh! We call heaven and earth to the witness, of our innocence, and their injustice.

But, while they are so busy in censuring and ejecting others, we do well to call their eyes back to themselves; whom our Divines have sufficiently convinced of errors, though not directly, yet reductively fundamental: which might easily be displayed here, if that discourse were proper for the subject we have in hand. I remember learned Tilenus, in our frequent and familiar conferences, was wont to instance in four grounds of our discession from the Romanists: their Tyranny, under which were comprised their challenged Primacy and Impeccability; their Idolatry; their Heretical Opinions; their Flagitious Practices and Doctrines tending to the establishing thereof, as the lawfulness of the murdering of princes, the toleration of stews, the allowance of children's deserting of parents on pretence of religion, the maintenance of their equivocations, and the like: from all, from any of which, it will be a hard task for their skilfullest advocate to make good their vindication.

* *Quis ferat istos, qui tantum sibi sumunt, ut, ubi libitum fuerit, pro germanâ Scripturâ suos assuunt pannos?* Erasm. Præfat. in Hilarii Opera.

But we are not now upon a theme of accusation; rather desiring to employ ourselves upon the furtherance of our own peace; so far only meddling with the Roman party, as they are injurious to our interest in the Catholic Church of Christ.

SECT. 5.

The undue Alienation of the Lutheran Churches from the other Reformed.

But how happy were it, if this uncharitableness were only confined to the Seven Hills; and were the peculiar stain of the Roman Church! It is too lamentable to see how it hath enlarged itself, even to some of those sister Churches, who, together with us, have withdrawn themselves out of Babylon. Amongst whom, some of the rigid followers of the way of Luther, have not stuck to pray; "From having any brotherhood with Calvinists, Good Lord, deliver us*." How sad a thing is it, to see such deadly discord amongst brethren! Woe is me, what evil spirit is this, that hath gone between the professors of the same religion, and wrought so desperate an alienation of hearts, in so small a difference of opinions?

With what heat have those Sacramentarian wars been followed, in several successions! first†, between Luther and Carolostadius; then, betwixt Luther and the Divines of Zurich; after that, betwixt Westphalus and Calvin; yet again, betwixt Heshusius and Clebitius; then farther, betwixt Brentius and Bullinger; and now, ever since, by the abettors of Ubiquity, to this present day: when as, if both sides would have calmly scanned and fairly interpreted each others' judgment, it would have appeared, that there was no just ground for so mortal a hostility.

Sometimes, when passion and prejudice were laid aside, they came so near to each other in their expressions, that any by-stander would have verily thought the quarrel had been at an end.

Besides that famous Conference at Marpurg, Anno 1529; very memorable was that convention of worthy Divines at Wittenberg, Anno 1536‡: wherein, when Capito, Bucer, and Musculus, with the most eminent Divines of Higher Germany, in a meeting with Luther, Melancthon, Jonas, Pomeranus, Cruciger, and the other Doctors and Preachers of Wittenberg, had conferred their judgments in a loving and quiet way; Luther and the rest of his part were so well satisfied with the professed explication of the other side, that, after some little withdrawing, he and his associates returned with this answer: "If ye believe and teach, that, in the Holy Supper, the true body and the true blood of our Lord is exhibited, given, and taken, and not mere bread and wine only; and that this

* Prolæus. *A fraternitate Calviniani, libera nos, Domine.* Fascicul. l. i. q. 7.
† Jo. Jesierus Scaphusus, de Belli Eucharistici Diuturnitate. ‡ Hospinianus in Historiâ Sacrâ è Ludovico Rabo et Jo. Swiccio, ex Buceri Scriptis Anglicanis.

receiving and exhibiting is truly, and not imaginarily done; we are all agreed, and we do acknowledge and receive you as our dear brethren in the Lord*." This, when Bucer and the rest openly and cheerfully avowed, they all shook hands, and embraced each other, and departed.

Who would not have now hoped, that the flood-gates of this strife had been let down and fully stopped; so as we should have heard no more of this controversy, to the world's end? And why should there not be an eternal peace, upon these terms†? That, which Bucer and his associates averred above a hundred years ago, we still say and maintain: that, which was a truth then, hath been so ever since, and shall be to all eternity. Well, therefore, may we ask, with Tiberius's soldiers, τί μαχόμεθα; "What do we fight for?"

But, if the great make-bate betwixt heaven and earth, the common enemy of mankind, will not yet suffer us to be quiet; but will be raising causeless broils in the Church of God, how well doth it beseem those, who have the better of the cause, after the example of good Abraham, to sue for that peace, which should be sued for to them!

Wherein I do much congratulate the exemplary practice of the eminent Divines of our own and the neighbour Churches, actuated by the unwearіable endeavours of our worthy and never-enough-commended Duræus‡, who have given noble testimonies of their holy forwardness and zealous inclinations toward a blessed union of the Evangelical Churches; and have clearly shewed the easy reconcileableness of these differences, if some harsh men were not too much wedded to their own wills and opinions.

And, certainly, nothing can be more evident, than that we all agree in fundamental truths; and that those things, wherein we differ, are mere points of scholastical disquisition: such as may, perhaps, be fit for Divines to argue in their academical disputations; not worthy to trouble the public peace, or to perplex the heads, much less the hearts, of Christian people.

For instance, in this business of the Eucharist§, which hath been made the fuel of the greatest fire, so much as toucheth the foundation, is, That the body and blood of Christ are so truly present in the administration of the Sacrament, as that they are truly received by the worthy Communicant: That the bread and wine are the elements ordained by Christ, in the worthy receiving whereof the prepared Communicant partaketh of the body and blood of Christ,

* *Si creditis et docetis, in Sacrâ Cœnâ, verum corpus et verum sanguinem Domini exhiberi, dari, et sumi, et non panem et vinum tantùm; et quòd perceptio et exhibitio hæc verè fiat, et non imaginariè; inter nos convenit, vosque agnoscimus et recipimus ut charos fratres in Domino.* Hosp. è Scriptis Bucer. Angl. *Fortunatus Calvinista dicit corpus Christi in Sacramento verissimè realissimèque percipi.* Valent. Tom. iv. dis. 6. q. 3. † *Diu satis erat credere, sive sub pane consecrato, sive quocunque modo, adesse verum Christi corpus.* Erasm. 1 Cor. vii. ‡ M. Jo. Duræus. Vide Sententias 4. de Pace Evangel câ. § Vide D. Davenant, ubi supra, Adhortat. ad Pacem, et Sentent. & Theol.

to the nourishing of his soul unto eternal life: That the bread and wine are present, and are received in a bodily, local, natural, sensible manner; but that the body and blood of Christ are present, and partaked of in a divine and spiritual manner. And, in all these, both parts do fully accord. All this being admitted, that contention, which is raised concerning the oral perception and manducation of the body of Christ, can be no other than either a strife of words or a nice school-point.

In the matter of Ubiquity, which makes so ill a sound in the world, as if it meant to destroy the truth of the Humanity of Christ, let but the distinction of learned Zanchius * be admitted, not new devised by him, but cited out of former Authorities; and that quarrel is reconciled. For, it is one thing, what we affirm concerning the Humanity of Christ, of the natural being of it; another, what we affirm of the personal being. To say, that the human nature of Christ is naturally omnipresent, were to confound the natures and to destroy the person: but, to say that the human nature of Christ is personally omnipresent, that is, that the Godhead and Manhood, being so united as that they make up one indivisible person, the person of Christ being omnipresent, the human nature may be in that relation said to be so, in that it is personally united to that Deity which is omnipresent †: If the prædication seem to any man somewhat hard, yet it is worthy to be welcome, if it may bring peace.

As for those differences concerning Predestination, which Arminius and his followers have borrowed from the Lutheran Divines, the Divines of both parts, in that amicable conference at Leipsic ‡, professed their agreement in all the main and important points; leaving those parcels unaccorded, which are meet to be sent and confined to the Schools.

Shortly then, however matters may be aggravated by ill-willers to peace, would our brethren of the Confession of Auspurge entertain but the like thoughts of Christian charity towards us, which we do willingly harbour towards them, these woeful jars, wherewith the Church of Christ is lamentably torn asunder, would soon see a happy end, and shut up in a blessed reconcilement; Heb. xiii. 20. 1 Thess. v. 23. which the God of Peace vouchsafe to grant, for the sake of him, who is the Prince of Peace; Isa. ix. 6. Amen.

* Zanch. de Dissidio Cœnæ.—Field, Of the Church. Append.—Pic. Miran.—Cajetan.—Bellarm. de Incarnat. l. iii. c. 16. fatetur *gloriam Dei, et omnem potestatem, tribui humanæ naturæ Christi; non in ipsâ, sed in supposito, i. per gratiam unionis.* Sic et Lutherani, &c. † *Fatemur totum Christum præsentem quatenus in verbo hypostaticè subsistit caro, quæ præsentia est universalis.* Theod. Bez. advers. J. Andream. ‡ Colloq. Lipsiacum inter D. Mat. Horm., D. Polic. Liserum., D. Henr. Hofnetum; & D. J. Bergium, D. J. Crocium, D. Theoph. Mubargerum: anno 1631.

SECT. 6.

The Differences, betwixt the other Reformed Churches, and our own.

But not to dwell upon the quarrels abroad; lest I should be checked with that ill husband, who, when his own house was on fire, runs to quench his neighbour's: I must confess, with sorrow enough, that our intestine broils, both of Church and State, are such as no tears can be sufficient to bewail; and that we are so much more miserable than all the nations round about us, by how much we have been hitherto more happy than they.

The civil distempers are fit for another cure; to the success of any remedy whereof, my prayers shall contribute their utmost: and, would to God, my blood could ought avail! O my God, when wilt thou put an end to these unexpressible miseries? Oh, when wilt thou bind up the wounds of this bleeding and gasping nation? *Lord, save us, we perish.* Woe is me! if the sword go thus on, where is the Church? or, what do we talk of physic, after death? But, if it might please the justice of the Almighty, to take up with this deluge of blood that is already shed, and in his mercy to spare yet the remainder of his people, there might yet be place for those spiritual remedies of Church-discord, which we are now about to prescribe.

The divisions of the Church are, either general, betwixt our Church and the other Reformed; or special, those within the bosom of our own Church: both which require several considerations.

For the former: blessed be God, there is no difference in any essential * matter, betwixt the Church of England and her Sisters of the Reformation. We accord in every point of Christian Doctrine, without the least variation: their public Confessions and ours, are sufficient convictions to the world, of our full and absolute agreement. The only difference is, in the form of outward administration: wherein also we are so far agreed, as that we all profess this form not to be essential to the being of a Church, though much importing the well or better being of it, according to our several apprehensions thereof; and that we do all retain a reverent and loving opinion of each other, in our own several ways; not seeing any reason, why so poor a diversity should work any alienation of affection in us, one towards another: but, withal, nothing hinders, but that we may come yet closer to one another, if both may resolve to meet in that primitive government, whereby it is meet we should both be regulated, universally agreed upon by all antiquity; wherein all things were ordered and transacted by the consent of the Presbytery, moderated by one constant President

* *Laus Deo, nullum inter nos de Religionis substantiâ certamen.* Theol. Gallus de Discipl. Ecclesiæ, c. i. An. 1622.

thereof *. The primary and perpetual practice whereof, no man can doubt of, that hath but seen the writings of Clemens and Ignatius; and hath gone along with the history of those primitive times. It shall be needless, though it were most easy, to bring together a cloud of witnesses, both ancient and modern, to so clear a truth; we may well rest in the judgment of Mr. John Camero, the learnedest Divine, be it spoke without envy, that the Church of Scotland hath afforded in this last age †: *Nullus est dubitandi locus, &c.* "There is no doubt at all," saith he, "but that Timothy was chosen by the College of the Presbyters to be the President of them; and that, not without some authority over the rest: but yet, such as have the due bounds and limits. And that this was a leading case, and common to other Churches, was never denied by any author." Words may not break square, where the things are agreed. If the name of a Bishop displease, let them call this man a Moderator, a President, a Superintendent, an Overseer; only, for the fixedness or change of this person, let the ancient and universal practice of God's Church be thought worthy to oversway. And if, in this one point, wherein the distance is so narrow, we could condescend to each other; all other circumstances and appendances of varying practices or opinions might, without any difficulty, be accorded. But, if there must be a difference of judgment in these matters of outward policy, why should not our hearts be still one ‡? Why should such a diversity be of power, to endanger the dissolving of the bond of brotherhood? May we have the grace, but to follow the truth in love, we shall, in these several tracks, overtake her happily in the end; and find her embracing of peace, and crowning us with blessedness.

SECT. 7.

The Differences within our own Churches, at home.

As union is necessary to the making up of peace, so also, in some cases, is Dissipation. While we are so charitable, as not to exclude

* *Instituti divini est, ut in omni cœtu Præsbyterorum unus sit, qui cæteris præeat et præsit reliquis.* Bez. de Grad. Minist. Evang. *Hanc formam commendárunt Patres, observavit antiquissima Ecclesia; imò, quod est totius rei caput, instituisse videtur ipse Christus per Apostolos.* Theolog. Gallus de Discipl. Ecclesiæ, An. 1652. cap. de Episcop. † J. Camer. Myrothec. in 1 Tim. iv. 14.—Ita Calvin. *Habebant singulæ civitates Presbyterorum collegium, qui pastores erant et doctores, &c. Illi ex suo numero in singulis civitatibus unum eligebant, cui specialiter dabant titulum Episcopi, ne ex æqualitate, ut fieri solet, dissidia nascerentur.* Calv. Instit. l. iv. c. 4.—*Non populum aggreditur Joannes, sed principem Cleri, utique Episcopum.* Marlorat in Apoc. ii.—*Polycarpus Smyrnensis Episcopus, ab ipso Joanne ordinatus, supra 70 annos præfuit illi Ecclesiæ.* Theol. Gal. ubi supra.—*Hanc gubernationem ab Apostolorum ætate constitutam esse ostendit perpetua Episcoporum successio, quorum seriem deduxit Euseb.* in 4. summis totius orbis Ecclesiis. Id. ib. ‡ *Adhærebo vobis etsi nolitis; adhærebo, etsi nolim ipse.* Bern. ad Præmonstr. Ep. 252.

any Church which holdeth the foundation from the benefit of Christian Communion, we are yet far from giving way to every combination * of Christians, to run aside; and to raise up a new Church of their own; and to challenge all the privileges incident to a lawful Church of Christ, as equally due to their segregation: this were to build up Babel, instead of Jerusalem. *Faciunt favos et vespæ* †; as that Father said well: Even wasps meet together, in some holes of the earth, or hollow trees; and make combs, as well as the profitable bees: but no man ever bestowed upon them the cost of a hive.

If men be allowed a latitude of opinions, in some unnecessary verities, it may not be endured, that, in matter of religion, every man should think what he lists, and utter what he thinks, and defend what he utters, and publish what he defends, and gather disciples to what he publisheth ‡. This liberty, or licentiousness rather, would be the bane of any Church.

There cannot be a more pregnant instance, than that of New England, yet fresh, not in our memory, but in our eye; where the late Jezebel ‖, which called herself a Prophetess, had well-near corrupted and overthrown that Thyatira, by her private, but pernicious conceits; broached, first, amongst her gossips; then, diffused to wiser heads; and, at last, under an opinion of sanctity, entertained and abetted by some of the elders and teachers of that Church, which promised to itself, and professed more strictness of discipline, than that which it left. And what success the dangerous fancies of one Eaton, the father of Antinomianism in this Diocese, hath had, I would rather bewail, than express. The truth is, that if way may be given to this wild freedom, it cannot be, but monsters of opinion must needs pester the world; a real emblem whereof, it pleased God to shew, in that remote colony of our retired brethren §.

It was a conceit of old, reported, I perceive, by many historians ¶, that the Huns, a people wherewith, amongst the rest, the civiler parts of the world were much infected, were a breed of men, begotten by certain familiar ** devils that haunted those deserts, of certain witches which they called Alyrumnas: the truth whereof, as they say, was evidenced in the ghastly and ugly visages of those savage persons. Surely, such a generation we must expect of misshapen opinions, begot betwixt evil spirits and mad phantasies, if every fanatical brain may be suffered to vent and propagate its own whimsies and prodigious imaginations. And, I would to God, our sad experience did not already afford us too lamentable examples in this kind. I profess, some paradoxes, that

* *Ecclesiæ nomen consensus concordiæque est.* Chrys. in Epis. ad Galat. c. i. † *Faciunt favos et vespæ, faciunt Ecclesias et Marcionitæ.* Tertul. advers. Marcion. l. iv. c. 5. ‡ Libertas Prophetandi, challenged by Simon Episcopius, &c. ‖ Mrs. Hutchison. See the Discovery of the Anabaptists and Antinomians of New England. § Ubi supra: Discovery of Anabaptists, &c. ¶ For. de Gall. Imperio ex Jernande.—Paulus Aquileg. Hist. l. xii. ** *A Faunis Phycariis, &c.*

have looked forth into the public light, have been so horrible, that I dare not so much as to repeat them: and what shafts one archer hath shot, is known and censured; though I fear they will yet stick fast in many souls.

The issue is, that, as we must labour to unite all those, which should be conjoined; so we must take care, if ever we would enjoy peace, to dissipate those, which will not, or should not, or cannot be united *.

Those, therefore, who do pertinaciously and unreclaimably maintain doctrines destructive to the foundation of Christian Religion, must necessarily be avoided and suppressed. It is the charge of the Disciple of Love, *If any man bring not, i. e.* oppose *this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God-speed;* 2 John 10: and, more plainly of the Doctor of the Gentiles, *A man, that is a heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject;* Tit. iii. 10. Those, that fly out from a true established Church, and run ways of their own, raising and fomenting sects and schisms amongst God's people, let them receive their doom; not from me, but from the blessed Apostle: *Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them, which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine, which ye have learned, and avoid them: for they, that are such, serve not the Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and, by good words and fair speeches, deceive the hearts of the simple;* Rom. xvi. 17, 18.

CHAP. II.

OF THE WAYS OF PEACE WHICH CONCERN PRIVATE PERSONS.

Now, then, for the better prevention or remedy of these mischiefs, which attend spiritual discord, let us address ourselves to the chalking out of those Ways of Peace, which the God of Peace hath called us to walk in; and which shall undoubtedly lead us to our desired end.

And those ways are either private or public: Private, such as every Christian must frame himself to tread in; Public, such as are fit for every Church and State.

SECT. 1.

The First Private Way of Peace: To labour against the inward grounds of Contention; viz. (1.) *Pride:*—(2.) *Self-Love:*—(3.) *Envy, and Malice:*—(4.) *Covetousness.*

First, then, for each PRIVATE PERSON; the most ready way to peace, is, TO LABOUR WITHIN HIMSELF AGAINST THE INWARD

* *Hujusmodi hominum pravitati, non tam disputationum studio, quàm authoritatum privilegio est resistendum.* Prosper contra Collatorem.

CAUSES AND GROUNDS OF CONTENTION; which are commonly Pride, Self-Love, Envy, Covetousness.

(1.) *Only by Pride cometh contention*, saith the wisest of men; Prov. xiii. 10: whose observation is seconded by all experience; for, what is it, that kindles this fire every where, but height of insolence, and over-weening?

"I am better than thou," raises the furious and bloody contestations for precedency: "I am holier than thou," causes a contemptuous separation from company, better, perhaps, than ourselves: "I am wiser than thou," is guilty of all the irregular opinions, that the world is disquieted withal. These three quarrels of emulation, for worth, holiness, wisdom, are they, that put the whole earth into combustion *.

[1.] In that tribe, which should be sacred, who knows not, what broils have been raised, for but a Priority of Place? What scuffling, and shouldering, and bloodsheds have been, in the records of history, betwixt the trains of Canterbury and York, whether's Cross should take the wall! And what high terms have been between the Sees of Rome † and Constantinople, to the great trouble of Emperors and Councils, he must needs be a stranger to the Church-story, that knoweth not. Yea, what is it, that hath made such havock in the Church of Christ, for these many hundred years, but the Man of Sin, his advancing himself above all that is called God? so as he, that was first an humble subject, ready to lick the dust of the feet of princes, now would be lording it over the great monarchs of the earth ‡; who must think it no small honour, to be admitted to hold his towel, to serve in his dish, to bear his canopy, to hold his stirrup, to lead his horse, to kiss his foot. He, that was once, *singulis minor*, a servant of servants, is now *major universis*: so much greater than a General Council, that, to make but the comparison, is heretical. Lastly, he, that was once dragged to every bar, now makes but one tribunal with || God. How hast thou climbed up into heaven, O Lucifer! How hast thou said in thy heart, *I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation!* Isa. xiv. 14.

[2.] In the second place, what divisions are wont to be made by an over-conceit of Sanctity, needs no other instance, than that of the proud Pharisees; who therenpon kept their distance from the Sons of the Earth, as their scorn styled them; and could say, as they had learned of their arrogant predecessors §, *Stand by thyself:*

* *Dum gloriam usurpant, turbant pacem.* Bernard. Ep. 126. † *Antiquæ Romæ throno quòd urbs illa imperaret, jure Patres privilegia tribuere; et, eâ consideratione moti,* 150 *sanctissimi Dei Episcopi novæ Romæ throno æqualia privilegia tribuere, &c.* Concil. Chalced. Acts 15. Can. 27. ‡ Vide Librum Sacr. Cer. || *Hodie tenere Concil. Generale esse supra Papam; dicet hæreticum.* Paul. Grysald. Aquil. de Confes.—*Nec à Papa ad Deum potest appellari, cum sit idem Tribunal.* Vival. Caf. Bullæ 2. nu. 5.—*Papa Romæ est absolutè supra Gener. Concil. ita ut nullum in terris supra se judicium agnoscat.* Bellar. De Rom. Pont. l. ii. c. 26. Azor. Instit. mor. p. i. c. 14. Valent. Anal. l. viii. c. 7. § Μίασμον γὰρ ἡγεῖται τὸ τινὸς ἅψασθαι. Epiph. de Samarit.

come not near to me; for I am holier than thou; Isa. lxv. 5. And, under the times of the Gospel, what need we any other witness, than the cells and cloisters of retired votaries, whose very secession proclaims their contempt of sinful seculars; and doth as good as say, *This people, which knoweth not the Law, is accursed?* And, what other can be the language of those picked combinations of Saints out of Churches, Churches out of Parishes, Members out of Congregations, and Seekers out of Select Members, which we hear of in our woeful subdivisions?

[3.] But that, which is guilty of the most general debate, is the over-valuation of Wisdom: out of the opinion whereof, every man is ready to idolize his own imagination; and to fall foul on any, whosoever will not fall down and worship it. Hence are those infinite paradoxes, not in philosophy only, but, which can never be enough lamented, in matter of religion; daily hatched, and stiffly maintained, to the unspeakable disturbance of our Christian peace. Whosoever, therefore, desires to have his bosom a meet harbour for peace, must be sure to quit it of this blustering inmate of pride; which, wherever it lurks, will be raising storms and tempests of contention.

(2.) The pew-fellow to pride is *Self-Love*, and no less enemy to peace.

This makes a man to sacrifice to himself, with Sejanus; and to admire and over-prize ought of his own; and weds him to his own particular interest, with the neglect, or, if need be, the affront of all others.

This moves every man to make that challenge, which the blessed Apostle most justly professed, *And I think also, that I have the Spirit of God;* 1 Cor. vii. 40. And, if a Micaiah will be pretending a different light, this stirs up a Zedekiah to buffet him; and to ask, *Which way went the Spirit of the Lord from me to speak unto thee?* 1 Kings xxii. 24.

This is it, that turns every man's goose into a swan, and causes the Hermit to set more value upon his cat, than Gregory upon the world *.

This is it, that requires fair glosses to be set upon our own actions †, and renders us impatient of all contradiction: and, where it finds the least opposition; like a violent torrent which is dammed up with slight turfs, it bears down all before it, and impetuously gusheth forth, and fills the channels, and overspreads the plains: so as, where this prevails, there can be no room for Peace.

(3.) If yet there can be a more direct and professed enemy of peace, it is that of *Envy* and *Malice*.

These disaffections to the persons, have ever raised a hostility to the best causes. "My *puisné*, my rival, my enemy is advanced: I lie still neglected: am I so tame as to suffer it?" "My unequal neighbour goes away with the reputation: no man looks at my

* Bromiard. Summa Prædic. verb. Divitiæ. † *Jura Rom. Pontificum sunt reverenter glossanda.* Jo. Major. Disp. an Concil. sit supra Papam.

abler parts and better merits: while he is all, shall I abide to be nobody?" "Shall Jacob go away with the birthright and blessing?" saith Esau; Gen. xxvii. 41: "Shall Eldad and Medad prophesy?" saith Joshua; Num. xi. 28. "Shall Moses and Aaron overtop us?" saith Korah, and his company; Num. xvi. 3. "Shall David be sung up for victories?" saith Saul; 1 Sam. xviii. 8. "Shall Nehemiah build the walls of Jerusalem?" saith Sanballat; Neh. ii. 19.

Hereupon, straight follow secret underminings, open oppositions, deadly contestations. Envy in the bosom, is like a subterraneous fire shut up in the bowels of the earth, which, after some astonishing concussation, breaks furiously out, with noise and horror; and if a city, a mountain be in the way, blows it up, or swallows it down into that dreadful gulph which it maketh. And *Who is able to stand before envy?* saith wise Solomon? Prov. xxvii. 4.

No mortal tongue or pen is able to express the woeful stirs, that have hence been raised in the Christian Church, even from the first plantation of it. No sooner is the woman delivered of her male-child, than this red dragon stands before her to devour it; Rev. xii. 4.

Yea, even in those saddest times, ere the Church could have space to breathe herself from her public miseries, under that hot persecution, begun by Decius and continued by Gallus and Volusianus and Hostilianus Perpenna *, when as the Christians could not meet in their wonted caves and vaults for their holy devotions; yet, even then, an emulous Novatus could be scuffling with Cornelius, the Bishop of Rome, for his Chair; and that so fiercely, as that he forced the Communicants, upon the receipt of the Sacrament, to swear that they would not return from him to that lawful competitor.

What should I speak of the slanders and machinations, raised and pursued against holy Athanasius, not by single persons only, but by Synods; by a Council, that would pretend to † Oecumenical; enough to stuff a volume? From whence did these and all the other tumults, schisms, and heresies of Novatianus, Ursinus ‡, Arius ‖, Sabatius §, Aerius ¶, and the rest of those Spiritual Incendiaries take their rise, but from the evil eye, which they cast upon the promotions of their corrivals, and the failing of their own? The odious aspersion whereof, Binius, from the false intelligence of some of our own, calumniously throws upon our Wickliffe; whom he slanders, for his missing the Bishoprick of Worcester, to have fallen upon that successful contradiction.

* Cornel. Epist. ad Lupicinum, Episcopum Viennensem. † Pseudo-Synodus Sardicensis Epist. Synodali ad Donatum, Episcopum Carthag.—Mediolannense Conc. Univers. ep. 300. et amplius Epis. Cornel. Epist. ad Fabium 163. ‡ *Ursinus invidit Damaso.* Socr. l. iv. c. 24. ‖ *Alexandro Epis. invidit Arius.* Theodor. l. i. c. 2. § *Sabatius ob negatum Episcopatum separat se.* Socr. l. vi. c. 4. ¶ August. de Hæresibus. *Aeriani ab Aerio Presbytero ægrè ferente quòd non ordinaretur Episcopum.—Theobutas quidam, qui repulsus non meruit Episcopatum, cepit turbare omnia.* Euseb. l. iv. c. 22.

Not to meddle with the desperate schisms of the Roman Antipopes, some whereof have lasted little less than an age, in an utter ambiguity of the right succession, and have been drenched with streams of blood, and all out of an envious competition of usurped honour; but to look rather home to ourselves; how happy were it, if our present quarrels were as far from envy, as they are from charity, and that malice had not a finger in these spiritual contentions *!

Even the best cause may be ill managed; and the best management may be ill-grounded. *Some preach Christ even of envy and strife*, saith the Chosen Vessel; Phil. i. 15. What act can be better, than to preach Christ? what motive can be worse, than strife and envy? so as, the best and worst actions may meet upon the same ground. As ever we desire to avoid the worst of evils, or to enjoy the comfort of our best actions, let it be our care, to rid our souls of this hellish fury of Envy and Maliciousness.

(4.) That, which is the root of all evil, i. e. *Covetousness*, may well challenge a share in the evil of dissension.

Some, saith St. Paul, *having coveted after money, have erred from the faith;* 1 Tim. vi. 10: and have not only miscarried in their own persons, but have turned hucksters of the word of God, to the corrupting thereof, to their own advantage †: yea, and of men's souls also; *Through covetousness do they, with feigned words, make merchandize of you*, saith St. Peter; 2 Pet. ii. 3. Thus did the Pharisees of old; who, under colour of long prayers, devoured widows' houses; Luke xvi. 14: being not more branded with hypocrisy, than covetousness; with whom gain was godliness; 1 Tim. vi. 5.

And from this evil disposition of the heart, a world of quarrels is raised in the Church of God. He, that well knew the pedigree of these mischiefs, hath told us, that the *doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth*, (1 Tim. vi. 4, 5.) arises from this dangerous misprision of gain. Had not the masters of the Pythoness been stripped of the gain they made of that spirit of divination, by the powerful command of the Apostle, the Devil had still possessed the mind; and Paul and Silas had escaped their scourging, and stocking, and imprisonment; Acts xvi. 16, &c. Had not Demetrius the silversmith, and the rest of the craftsmen, lost the rich trade of Diana's shrines, by St. Paul's preaching, Ephesus and he had been quiet; Acts xix. 24, &c.: it is their penny, that makes the uproar. So then, *he, that is greedy of gain, troubleth* not *his own house* only, (Prov. xv. 27.) but the House of God also.

In short therefore, he, that hath *freed his heart of Pride, Self-Love, Envy, Covetousness;* and he only, is in a MEET POSTURE FOR THE ENTERTAINMENT OF PEACE.

* *In denario litis non est obolus amoris.* Gerson. † Καπηλεύοντες τὸν λογόν. 2 Cor. ii. 16.

SECT. 2.

The Second Private way of Peace: The Composing ourselves to a Fit Disposition for Peace: and, therein, (1.) *A Meek and Humble Temper:*—(2.) *Obedience to our Spiritual Guides:*—(3.) *Charitable Affection to our Brethren:*—(4.) *A Yieldableness upon Sight of Clearer Truths.*

OUR second work must be, TO COMPOSE OURSELVES TO A TEMPER FIT FOR THE HARBOUR OF SO BLESSED A GUEST.

(1.) Which shall be done, if, first, we have our hearts framed by the power of the Holy Spirit of God, to *a meek and humble disposition;* not thinking ourselves wiser than all our ancestors, or the whole Church of God besides ourselves.

It was a modest resolution of Elihu; *I said, Days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom*;* Job xxxii. 7. And much like unto it was the question of a grave and learned† Bishop, some five hundred years ago; *Nunquid Patribus, &c.* "Are we more learned and wiser than the Fathers? Do we proudly presume to define that, which their deep prudence thought fit to pass over?"

Not, that the Spirit of God is confined to times or persons, who is most free to breathe where he listeth: or, that a dwarf, sitting upon the shoulders of a giant, cannot see further than he; doubtless, he may: and, perhaps, some truths may have risen late, and be long in dressing, ere they come abroad into the world; and, when they do come forth, may shew themselves unto babes, while they are hid from the wise and prudent; Matth. xi. 25.

But, heed must be taken, that we do not rashly determine of obscure and doubtful verities, upon pretence of our private light; and that, not without sure grounds, we run alone, and leave all orthodox antiquity lagging behind us. How easily may we err, where we see no track before us!

Nothing is more evident, than that there have been further discoveries made of the visible and material heavens, in these latter ages, than ever were known to our predecessors; who could never have believed, that there were such lunets about some of the planets, as our late perspectives have descried: but, in the spiritual heaven, in vain shall we expect any further insight, than the already revealed will of the Father hath vouchsafed to open to us. No new way thither, no new mysteries there, can be hoped for. That new‡ Gospel, which some blasphemous friars would have foisted upon the Church in her thickest darkness, is justly exploded with abomination and scorn: this Gospel, which we have, is *Everlasting*§. It may be, some collateral truths may break forth,

* *Ego certè ab antiquitate non recedo, nisi coactus.* Zanch. in Colos. ii.

† Petho Pruniensum Episcopus. An. 1150.—*Nec enim sapientiores sumus quàm Patres nostri.* Bern. ad Hugon. de Sancto Vict. Ep. 77. ‡ Vide Chaucer's Romant of the Rose. § *Evangelium æternum.*

upon manifest events; for prophecies before they be fulfilled, are riddles; when they are fulfilled, turn histories: but new doctrinal truths important and saving, are vainly expected, and fondly pretended.

It is not more needful than weighty counsel, which the Apostle gives to his Romans; and, in them, to us; that we should not *super-sapere** : yea, perhaps it is more than a counsel, a charge of his: *For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think: but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith:* as well knowing, what woeful effects would necessarily follow upon this height of spirit. For, hereupon ensues a scorn, to be either controlled or directed; a disdain of common and received opinions†; a resolution to walk nearer and fairer ways of our own‡; a defiance to all contradiction; an affectation of higher streams of sanctity; a challenge of new and super-celestial illuminations: diseases, which I would to God our times were clear of; at least, not more infested with, than those of our forefathers: although, what age ever was there, wherein some spirits would not be soaring too high? even from the wild and abstruse mysteries§ of the Valentinians, Basilidians, Carpocratians; and, afterwards, the Manichees, to this present day.

The learned Chancellor of Paris‖ tells us of a woman, one Maria de Valentianas, that had, lately before his relation, written a book with incredible subtlety, concerning the prerogative and eminence of Divine Love; to which, whatever soul hath attained, is, according to her, let loose from all the Law of God's Commandments. Such speculations as these, and others of so high a nature as I fear to mention, are no novelties to these days of light and liberty; arising merely from the want of a meek and modest humility of soul, resting in plain, simple, received truths.

Shortly, peace can never dwell, but under the roof of a meek and humble heart.

(2.) In the second place, we shall be fitly composed for the entertainment of peace, if we have learnt *to stoop to a submissive obedience unto our spiritual guides.*

It is the full and absolute charge of the blessed Apostle, worthy to be imprinted in our heart; *Obey them, that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account:* Heb. xiii. 17.

Not to press the vehement exhortations of the renowned Martyr Ignatius, who, in every of his Epistles, so strongly enforces this duty, as if all the life of religion lay upon it; I cannot omit that famous observation of the holy Martyr St. Cyprian¶: "Neither,"

* Rom. xii. 3. Μὴ ὑπερφρονεῖν. † *Res sordida est tritâ ac vulgari viâ vivere, &c.* Sen. Ep. 112. ‡ *Nihil juvat obvium.* Ibid. § Tran. l. i. ‖ Jo. Gers. de Distinctione Verarum Visionum a Fabis. ¶ Cyp. Cornelio de Fortunato et Felicissimo.

saith he, "do heresies or schisms arise from any other ground than this," *quòd Sacerdoti Dei non obtemperatur*, "that obedience is not yielded to the Priest of God."

I wish these times had not too much reason to under-write a *probatum est* to this truth; wherein it is lamentable to see how we are fallen into another extreme from our forefathers. They had learned, and practised accordingly, to take their faith upon trust from their teachers, and to pin their souls upon their pastors' sleeves; to put themselves blindfolded into the hands of their leaders, to carry them whither they knew best; and, but to question any point which their ghostly fathers delivered to them as the doctrine of the Church, was piacular: we, on the contrary, are ready to guide and judge our teachers, to slight and control their directions, to contemn and trample upon their persons. Away with this proud usurpation*! What distinction is there betwixt clergy and people? *Ye take too much upon you, Moses and Aaron, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them*; Num. xvi. 3. Woe is me, what an ill use do we make of that greater light which hath shined forth unto us, if it have made us more opinionative, more apt to err, more obstinate in error! The Romanists are all for blind obedience: the Romanists therefore go away with peace, without truth: ours, under pretence of striving for some truths, abandon peace!

How much happier were it for the Church of God, and for us, if we had learned to attribute so much to our learned and godly pastors, as to rest in their studied interpretations of God's will revealed in the Holy Scriptures, so far, as not easily, and without sure and apparent grounds, to depart from their grave judgments! It was the great praise of those noble Bereans, that, upon the preaching of Paul and Silas, *they searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so*, as they had delivered them; Acts xvii. 11. They examined the quotations of the Apostles: they did not take upon them to judge of the sense of their doctrine; whereto they so submitted, as that *they received the word with all readiness of mind.*

Not that I would have Christians to captivate their understanding to any man's private opinion; and swear into the words of any Master in Israel: that were a servility, meet for the adorers of that Roman Vice-God, who must believe that all the truth of God is locked up in the cabinet of his own breast; and that all the decisions of that Oracular Chair are inerrable†, though delivered without study or care. Our holy profession allows us another manner of freedom. Wherefore hath God given us our inward senses, and the powers of reason, if we may not make use of them, in the main chance of our souls? Doubtless, we may improve our faculties; but as scholars, not as masters; to know, not to cavil. If thy teacher walk not in his own by-ways, but leads thee along in the beaten path of the Church of God, wherein thou art, evi-

* "The Compassionate Samaritan." † Greg. de Valent.

dencing his directions by the word of truth; follow him without fear: it is safe for thee, thus to err*. Is it for thee now, upon the suggestion of some ignorant stranger, to stand still at the next turning; and to tell thy guide he goes the wrong way; and, forsaking him, to coast the country over hedges and ditches for a nearer cut, till thou have lost, with the way, thyself?

There are some men, that are too much addicted to the judgment of their superiors. Gerson† tells us, that the Cardinal of Amiens had wont to say of his brother Ebrudunensis, in a familiar sarcasm, as jesting at his too much dependance upon the Canon-Law, that, if he lay bemired in some dirty slough, he would not come forth, except there were a Canon shewed him for his rising up: and I fear these days afford too many, who, having once doted upon some admired teacher, how orthodox soever, cry up all his dictates for Gospel.

I cannot say, whether of these extremes be more dangerous: I am sure, both tend to confusion.

For the avoiding whereof, how happy were it, if our hearers would not think themselves too wise; and would content themselves to be rather disciples, than judges; and would be pleased to entertain reverent thoughts of those, that are set over them, not more for the gravity and wisdom of their persons, than for the authority of their places. Even Timothy's youth may not be contemned; and, upon this ground it was, that, amongst the Jews, though a man were never so learned, yet if his beard were not grown to some fulness, he was not allowed to minister in the synagogue‡. And, hereupon it was, that holier Antiquity, even from the days of great and gracious Constantine, thought it very conducible to the good success of the Gospel, to put respects of honour upon the sacred messengers of God: and even our Canutus could enact, *Pari cum Thano jure fruatur Presbyter* §. As, on the contrary, it is too true an observation of Damasus‖, where the name of Church governors is grown contemptible, the whole state of the Church must needs be perturbed.

In sum, therefore, if ever we desire to recover and maintain ecclesiastical peace, God's messengers must be greater in our eyes, and we lesser in our own.

(3.) Thirdly, to make up a fit composure towards peace, it shall be requisite, that we be *charitably affected to our brethren:* putting the best construction upon their practices or opinions; and allowing them such latitude of judgment in the lower rank of truths, as is no way prejudicial to the public peace.

It is a fair and equal rule of St. Augustin: "One thing may seem right and true to me; another man may judge otherwise: but neither do I prescribe what I say to another, neither doth that

* *Non recuso confusionem, quam mihi obedientiæ zelus invexit.* Bern. Ep. 280. ad Eugen. † Jo. Gerson. Collat. pro Licentiandis. ‡ Capell. Spicileg. in 1 Tim. iii. 1. § Leg. Canuti apud Henr. Spelman.

‖ Damas. Epist. de Chorepiscopis.

other prescribe to me*." *Charity*, saith the Apostle, *thinks not evil;* 1 Cor. xiii. 5. If a word or action be capable of a good sense, it is our fault, if we suit it not with the best: and, if our favour should be mistaken; yet, as that Father said well, "It is better to give an account for mercy, than for cruelty†." Had some men seen that austere Simeon, in the story ‡, going into a courtezan's house, and shutting the door after him, and making some stay in that polluted room, he would perhaps have misdoubted his unchastity: whereas, that holy man put himself under that unhallowed roof, for the happy conversion of that infamous sinner; hazarding his reputation, to win a soul.

There is nothing, which may not be taken with either hand: it is a spiritual unmannerliness, to take it with the left. It was a foul fault in Simon the Pharisee, and that which might have been well worthy to lose the thank of his entertainment, that, when he saw the woman which was a sinner, prostrate at the feet of Christ, and making an ewer of her eyes and a towel of her hair, to wash and wipe them, he could straight say, *This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman it is that toucheth him;* Luke vii. 39: whereas, he should rather have said, "What a merciful Saviour is this, that gives so gracious an admission to so sinful a penitent!" That decision of Casuists§ is full of charity, how just soever; That, "although the mother lived in the stews, the child is presumed to be the husband's, not an adulterer's:" neither is our useful judgment much short of this favour, That, if the husband be within the four seas, the child shall be held not illegitimate.

The like candid interpretations must we give in matter of opinions; making the best of doubtful terms; and receiving the harshest expressions, not without some grains of salt‖: the want whereof may prove extremely injurious, both to the authors and to ourselves; for there is no human writing, which needs not the favour of such fair ingenuity; without which, the Fathers themselves would scarce sound orthodox. Thus Erasmus dares say, that Augustin himself, even after all his Retractations, hath left many things in his works simply heretical¶; and can say of Luther, his great antagonist, that he hears some things are cried down in his writings, which, if they were soberly argued among learned and sincere men, would be found to avail much towards that spiritual and evangelical vigour, from which the world had too

* Aug. in Ps. xvi. *Potest mihi aliquid videri, alteri aliud; sed neque ego quod dixero præscribo alteri, nec ille mihi.* † *Melius est propter misericordiam rationem reddere, quàm propter crudelitatem.* Opus imperfect. in Matth. ‡ Evagrius. l. iv. c. 33. § *Quandoque jus fingit aliud esse quàm sit, fingit mulierem stipulatam dotem, natum qui non est.* Jo. de Geminiano, l. viii. c. 19. *Etiamsi mater viveret in prostibulo, præsumitur filius mariti et non adulteri.* Mart. Vivald. explan. Bullæ. ‖ *Cyrillus et Joh. Antiochenus anathematizarunt se, hæresim sibi mutuò objicientes; postea comperti idem sentire.* Act. Concil. Ephesini.—Idem de Cyrillo et Theodoreto.

¶ Eras. Ep. lib. xxiv. Joanni Episcopo. *Cùm Augustinus, post editas Retractationes, reliquerit simpliciter hæretica; si quis ea nunc velit tueri.*

much degenerated *: and, elsewhere, in an Epistle of his to Jodocus Justus, he professes that those things, which Luther urges, if they be moderately handled, come more near to the power of the Gospel†.

Without this candour, what monsters of opinion doth prejudice raise out of the most harmless writings! No man ever could be a more fit instance, than that honour of Rotterdam, traduced beyond example by the malicious cowls of his age: amongst whom, John Standish, a Minorite, impudently calumniates him to the King and Queen of England, as one, that denied the Resurrection ‡; others, that he had blasphemed all Christ's miracles, as done by magic: since which time, our modern Pontificians, and Bellarmin§ amongst the rest, can brand him as a friend to Arianism; and a patron of that Anabaptistical fancy of the unlawfulness of war; which yet himself, as præscious of so unjust an imputation, prevents and confutes in an Epistle to Paulus Voltzius‖. Shortly, himself professes, that the very sentences of our Saviour Christ, and his Apostle St. Paul, are, under his name, damned by his adversaries; when they are reported in his Paraphrase, under another person¶.

I would to God, this age were not palpably guilty of too much uncharitableness, this way. When we look upon errors, we are apt, as those that see through a mist, to think them greater than they are: every fault is a crime; every misopinion, a heresy. Neither can it be otherwise, while we are ready to impute to the contrary-minded, not only those things, which they profess to hold; but those, which we conceive to be consequent to their opinions, how vehemently soever disclaimed and defied by the authors. For the instances whereof, besides those of our daily experience, I refer my reader to the Treatise of Christian Moderation, where they are, to our sorrow, specified**. This is no other, than to enlarge the breach, and widen the wounds of God's Church; which we ought, by all good means, to bind and make up††. Why should not I rather, when I meet with a hard and crabbed expression in a worthy Divine, (as Piscator, Beza, Paræus) say, as Cruciger said of Luther‡‡, that "he means better, than sometimes, in his heat, he speaketh?" and say of the works

* *In Lutheri scriptis, &c.* Eras. Cuthberto Tonstallo, Episc. Londinens.

† *Quæ Lutherus urget, si moderatè tractentur, meâ sententiâ propiùs accedunt ad vigorem Evangelicum.* Ep. l. ii. ad Jodocum Justum. ‡ Eras. ep. l. xv. Thom. Moro. § Bellar. Præf. lib. de Christ. ‖ *Si quis à bellis, quæ jam secutus aliquot ob res nihili plus quàm Ethnicè gerimus, deterreat, notatur à Sycophantis quasi sentiant cum iis, qui negant ullum bellum gerendum Christianis.* lib. Ep. xxiii. P. Volt. ¶ *Quid hìc commemorem Christi Paulique sententias, meo nomine damnatas, cùm in Paraphrasi sub alienâ personâ referuntur?* Ep. l. xxii. ** Christian Moderation. Book ii. Rule 7.

†† *Nec ostentemus industriam, aut διαπληξιν, in augendis discordiis ut multi faciunt.* Phil. Melanch. ad Amicum Quendam: an. 1544. *Dissimulandus in corpore pulchro naevus unus.* Maldon. in Joannis xx.

‡‡ *Eum commodiùs sentire, quàm interdum loquitur, dum effervescit* Boxhorns. ex Autographo Crucigeri. Sic et Phil. Melanch. *Sciebam horridiùs scripturum Lutherum, quàm sentit.* Ep. ubi supra.

of our learned authors, as he said of the Pontifician Laws, that they are *reverenter glossanda*; "to have a reverent gloss put upon them?" Were this really and cordially done we should appear more innocent, and be less unquiet.

(4.) In the fourth and last place, if we would be fitly composed to peace, we may *not be too peremptory in our opinions and resolutions of slight and unimporting verities**.

We cannot be too stiff in the maintenance of main truths, though even to blood; our life can never be better sacrificed, than in so holy a quarrel. The *faith, that was once delivered to the Saints*, must be *earnestly contended for*; Jude 3: but, for other matters, that concern rather the ornament than the essence of religion, though they are fit to be known and resolved on; yet, with no other confidence, than that we are ready to yield upon a stronger conviction.

So, the blessed Apostle, that was *ready to die for the Name of the Lord Jesus*; yet, in ritual, outward, indifferent observances, professeth to *become all things to all men, that* he *might by all means save some*; 1 Cor. ix. 22: and he, that withstood Peter for Judaizing, to scandal and danger of loss (Gal. ii. 11, 12, 13.), professeth, that *to the Jews* he *became as a Jew, that* he *might gain the Jews; to them that are without law, as without law, that* he *might gain them that are without law*; 1 Cor. ix. 20, 21.

Some duties and opinions may be such, as do not oblige us to a necessary constancy; but, as we say of fashions, may vary upon occasion, according to the exigence of time and place. The Apostolical Constitution for abstaining from things strangled and from blood, though a famous Synodical Act, did not yet long bind the Church; Acts xv. 20: neither know I, whether it fell not under St. Paul's *rudiments* of *Touch not, taste not, handle not*; Col. ii. 20, 21: and those love-feasts, which were, with good allowance, celebrated in those primitive times, outlived not many ages. What determination St. Ambrose gave to young Augustin and his mother Monica, concerning the Saturday-fast, is well known; and holds, in all the like occasions. Rome hath one rite; Milan another.

Neither was it other, in the times of the Law. The brazen altar was for the sacrifices; and who durst offer besides it? yet, by reason of the multitude of the offerings and incapacity of the altar, Solomon hallowed the middle of the court that was before the house of the Lord, for that purpose; 1 Kings viii. 64. Neither doth he content himself with the same number of cherubims, which were in the Tabernacle; but doubles it. So did his father David, before him, anticipate the age of the priests; entering into their service five years earlier, than the Mosaical appointment. Certainly, no law of God or man holds a man close to his own first resolutions, in things not necessary or morally requisite.

It was a famous case, that is related of Agesilaus. His men ran shamefully away in the Leuctric fight. The law was, that flight

* *Cùm mentem in melius mutare, non levitas sit, sed virtus.* Am. in Ps. cxix.

must be punished with death. The wise king, finding the crime so universal, enacts, that the law must sleep for that day's work; but, ever after, must be awakened to an impartial execution*: "So," saith the historian, "the law, remaining entire in the words of the act, was, in the effect, for the present repealed†." The like, Appian tells us, was done in the case of Scipio, whose age was not yet by law capable of magistracy, though his parts were: the Senate, not thinking it fit to lose the employment of so eminent faculties, decrees the law, for that once, void; ever after, in full force. The like is to be said and done, in matter of opinion‡. It is a most odious thing, to be an Ecebolius in religion. That resolution of Ambrose was noble, and worthy of a Christian Bishop, which he took up to Valentinian the younger: "I follow," saith he, "the determination of the Nicene Council; from which neither sword nor death shall ever separate me§." yet the same Father was not less pliant in matter of rite, as we formerly intimated, than inflexible in points of faith.

And this is a disposition fit for all the clients of peace, to hold fast in known truths; in doubtful, to maintain, though not too eagerly, the probablest: in the main truths, to be over-ruled by faith; in less matters, by better reason. So, the African Bishops, with much Christian modesty, in the Council of Carthage: "It remains," say they, "that every man speak what he thinks of this matter; judging no man; nor removing any man from our communion, that is contrary-minded‖."

Now therefore, to wind up this clue of our Discourse, if we be *humble and meek-minded*, if *obedient to our spiritual guides*, if *charitable to our brethren*, if *not too peremptory in our opinions*, we have attained to a MEET TEMPER FOR THE ENTERTAINMENT OF PEACE.

SECT. 3.

The Third Private way of Peace: The Avoiding Unnecessary Questions.

IN the Private way of peace, it must be our third care, TO PUT OFF UNNECESSARY QUESTIONS, and TO SET BOUNDS TO OUR CURIOSITY.

There are three ranks of truths: there are some, necessary; some, profitable; some, impertinent. The necessary truths are neither¶ many nor obscure: the impertinent are many; and as litigious, as useless: only the profitable are worthy of our studious and careful disquisition.

It would anger a patient man, to read of Lupercus Berytius, the grammarian, that wrought three books of the Greek particle ἄν**:

* Ὅτι τὰς νόμους δεῖ σήμερον ἐᾶν καθεύδειν, &c. Dio. Cass. l. xxxix.

† Οὕτως ὁ νόμος ἐν τοῖς ἔργοις ἡμῖν μένων, ἔργῳ καθελύθη. Idem. Ibid.

‡ *Non turpe est sententiam mutare*, &c. Greg. Naz. Orat. 32.

§ Ambrose Ep. 32. ad Valent. ‖ Conc. Carth. sub Cyprian. ¶ *Pauca sunt necessaria vera.* Reg. Columb. ** Suidas.

or, of a Schoolman, that tediously disputes, whether a man may *equitare sine equo;* and acutely argues the difference, betwixt *modo quodam* and *quodam modo*:* whose vain agitations were enough to put a man to the study, whether it were better for a man to be idle, or to do nothing. There is a world of such frivolous thoughts; meet for them, that know not what to do with their leisure.

These are apt to engender strife†; and, like worms in the mud, to raise bubbles in the water.

Neither ever was the Church of God free from such sleeveless and unnecessary quarrels.

Even in the Jewish Church, besides those five main Sects; betwixt the families or combinations of Shammai and Hillel‡, we read of a deadly dissension, in eighteen, some say twenty-four, several points: so great, as that it was not to be composed by Elias himself; of whom they had wont to say, upon all occasions of doubt or difference; *Tisbi solvet nodos;* "The Tisbite shall untie all our knots."

As for the Evangelical Church, how it was, even in the first age, disquieted with these busy impertinencies, we need no other witness than St. Paul himself; whose frequent charges are vehemently bent against *fables and endless genealogies;* 1 Tim. i. 4. Titus i. 14. *contentions and strivings about the Law;* Titus iii. 9. against *profane and vain babblings;* 2 Tim. ii. 16: against *strife of words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers;* 2 Tim. ii. 14.

In the succeeding age, what loud and intemperate janglings the unadvised zeal of Victor raised, concerning the time of the celebration of Easter, is too well known.

Very remarkable is that passage, betwixt Gregory Bishop of Rome, and Mauritius the Emperor. Cyriacus, the Bishop of Constantinople, would needs style himself Universal Bishop. Gregory doth very gravely advise him, "to refrain from giving himself so foolish a title§." Mauritius, the Emperor, interposes; and, finding the quarrel grow hot between two so eminent Prelates, commands the peace; and charges them, "that, for the appellation of a frivolous name, there may not a scandal be raised in God's Church‖." Gregory replies modestly and discreetly to the Emperor: "I beseech your Imperial Piety to consider, that there are some frivolous things, which are altogether harmless; but others, again, extremely hurtful¶: for," saith he, "when Antichrist comes, and shall call himself God, it is a very frivolous thing so to term himself; but yet it is too too pernicious. If we regard the quantity of the word, *Deus*, alas, it is but two syllables; but if we

* Jo. Major. Vid. Melanch. Apolog. advers. Parisienses Sophist. † *Erroris comes arguta subtilitas, &c.* Orth. Frisin. ‡ Serar. Rab. prior.

§ *Ut ab stulti vocabuli se appellatione compescat.* ‖ *Mauritius præcepit, ne, pro appellatione frivoli nominis, scandalum &c.* ¶ *Sed rogo ut Imperialis Pietas penset, quia alia sunt frivola, valde innoxia; alia vehementer nociva,* &c. Greg. Maurit. Aug. l. vi. Ep. 30.

respect the weight of the iniquity, it is a world of mischief." Both said well, and to our purpose: the Emperor, that frivolous matters may not break the peace; the Bishop, that those points, whose frivolousness is hurtful and pernicious, must be strongly opposed.

Every slight question is not worthy of our engagement. Why would we herein grudge men the freedom of different thoughts? He is no mean Casuist* amongst the Romish Divines, that tells us confidently, it is the received judgment of their holiest Doctors, that "it is no inconvenience to hold, that amongst the very Angels themselves, there may be a diversity of opinion, in regard of those things which tend towards the end, so long as they all make jointly to the self-same end." How much more must this be tolerated to the best of men! Though our lives differ in the circumference, it is no great matter, so long as they meet in one centre of Essential Truth. It was sound counsel, that Pomeranus† gives to the Ministers of God's Word, *Ne tot articulis, &c*: That they should not, with so many Articles, and Creeds, and Confessions, confound the minds of plain Christians; but that they should draw up the sum of their belief into some few heads. Nothing hinders, but that Professors and Licentiates in Divinity may busy their thoughts and spend their hours, upon the knotty and abstruse questions of that sacred Faculty; as those, who would account it a shame to be ignorant of any cognoscible truth: but why should the heads of ordinary Christians be perplexed with those curious disquisitions‡? Let the Schools engross those nice and deep speculations: let not the Pulpits be vexed with them. And, for us, that are God's Ministers, whatever we may do in our Studies; yet, when we come to speak to the Assemblies of God's people, let us take up the resolution of the blessed Apostle, *I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified;* 1 Cor. ii. 2.

SECT. 4.

The Fourth Private way of Peace: To labour and pray for further illumination in all requisite Truths.

ALL necessary truths are plain and open; but many profitable truths, which may much concern us to know and wherein we ought to accord, want not some difficulty. We are not bidden to sit down in mere necessaries; but are vehemently called upon, to grow up

* Pet. Aquilanus dictus Scotellus in 2 sent. dist. 11. *Ad hoc dico secundum viam sanctorum, quòd nullum inconveniens est, inter Angelos esse opinionum diversitatem, quantum ad ea quæ sunt ad finem, dummodo maneat identitas finis.* † Pomeran. in 1 Cor. xv. ‡ *Tales quæstiones, quales nulla Lex Canonicè Ecclesiasticus necessariò præscribit, sed inanis dissoluti otii certatio proponit; licet ad ingenii acumen exercendum instituantur, tamen interiore mentis cogitatione continere debemus; et neque in publicos populi conventus temerè offerre, neque vulgi auribus inconsulto concredere.* Constant. Epistola ad Alexandrum et Arium, Euseb. l. ii. c. 69.

in knowledge. It is the gracious promise of God to us, by his prophet Hoseas; *Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain to the earth;* Hos. vi. 3. And, it is the daily prayer of the Apostle to God, for his Colossians, That they *might be filled with the knowledge of his will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;* Col. i. 9.

In the fourth place, therefore, it will be the duty of every private Christian, as in the ready way of peace, TO LABOUR AND PRAY FOR FURTHER ILLUMINATION IN ALL REQUISITE TRUTH, and FOR A READY INCLINATION OF HEART TO A PEACEABLE AGREEMENT THEREIN.

For there are two things, which hinder us from an unanimous conspiring in the same truth: either want of light in the Understanding, that we cannot look so deep into the mysteries of Divine verity as others; or some obstructions in the Will and Affections, through prejudice against the person or matter proposed. Both these must be removed by our prayers; by our endeavours.

It was the request of the man after God's own heart, *Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold the wonderous things of thy Law;* Ps. cxix. 18: and, in a real and heavenly compliment with his Maker, *I am thy servant: give me understanding, that I may know thy Testimonies;* Ps. cxix. 125. It was his, and must be ours; whose continual suit for ourselves must be that, which the blessed Apostle ceases not to make for his Ephesians, *That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, may give unto* us *the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him; that the eyes of* our *understanding may be enlightened;* Eph. i. 17, 18. Neither may we expect, that God will work miracles for us; that he will crown our idleness with blessings; that he will force mercies upon us, and tear open our lids that he may shine into our eyes: no; he looks that we should humbly comply with the means, and answer his heavenly motions with the willing obedience of our best endeavours: otherwise, *This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness more than light;* John iii. 19.

It is possible for a man to know the truth, and yet to *withhold* it *in unrighteousness;* Rom. i. 18. Illumination is not always followed with obedience. There are those, saith the Apostle, which, notwithstanding the light of knowledge, *are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness;* Rom. ii. 8. So as our prayers and endeavours must not be more bent against blind eyes, than against froward hearts; Prov. xi. 20. xii. 8: for there doth naturally reign in us a certain envious perverseness of spirit, which many times sets us off from the acknowledgment of those truths whereof we are inwardly convinced. I have sometimes read in Maldonate's Commentaries, when he falls upon a probable and fair sense of a difficult text, that he subjoins, "I could like that explication well, if it were not Calvin's:" like to that prejudicate Italian, who, being at deadly feud with a great rival of honour,

gave his vote, after a nap taken in the Senate, in no other terms than these; "I am against that which N. spake;" and being told that opposite of his had not yet spoken, "Then," saith he, "against what he will speak*." This disposition makes men such as the Psalmist complains of, *Haters of peace;* Ps. cxx. 6: of whom the Holy Ghost passeth a heavy doom, *Destruction and misery is in their ways; the way of peace have they not known;* Rom. iii. 16, 17.

As, therefore, it concerns every man to labour and pray against all unpeaceable affections in himself; so also to strive, both these ways, against the common distempers of others. Even those, that cannot aid God's Church with their counsels, with their purses; yet, with their prayers they may; yea, they must: *Oh, pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee: Peace be within thy walls, and plenteousness within thy palaces. For my brethren and companions' sake, I will now say, Peace be within thee: because of the house of the Lord our God, I will seek thy good;* Ps. cxxii. 6—9.

Next to our prayers, there is no better way to attain further illumination and settlement in all holy truths, than to walk conscionably after that light we have received. It is a golden rule of our Blessed Saviour, *If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God;* John vii. 17. Hence it is, that the Jews say, "Abraham had no other master than his own reins:" his humble obedience drew on further entireness with God: for, *to him, that hath, shall be given*, saith our Saviour: the improvement of one talent is graciously rewarded with more. In vain shall we complain of slackening our work for the want of a greater light, when we sit idle, and do nothing at all by a less.

It was a smart answer, which a witty and learned Minister† of the Reformed Church of Paris gave to a lady of suspected chastity, and now revolted; when she pretended the hardness of the Scripture: "Why," said he, "Madam, what can be more plain than, *Thou shalt not commit adultery?*" Had she not been failing in the practice of what she could not but know, she had found no cause to complain of the difficulty of that which she could not know: but it seems she, as too many more of us, was of the Athenian strain; of whom Tully says the proverb went, That "they knew what was right, but would not do it‡."

Did we not come short of our humble dependance upon God, and our care to be approved of him in known duties, our apprehensions could not miss of those things which concern our peace. Very memorable is that instance of the learned Chancellor of Paris; which, in imitation of St. Paul, he gives, I suppose, of himself in a third person: "I knew a man," saith he, "that, after much temptation concerning one of the Articles of Belief, was suddenly brought into so great light of truth and certainty, that there were left no remainders of doubt, no vacillation, but much

* Balt. Cast. de Aulico. † M. Durant. ‡ *Athenienses scire quæ recta sunt, sed facere nolle.* Cic. de Sen.

clearness and serenity; by the command of him that over-rules the waves, &c.: who, by the sole humiliation and captivating his understanding to the obedience of faith and the omnipotence of God, obtained such grace, as that he no more doubted of that point of belief, than of his own being: and, when he sought the reason of so great assurance and peace in believing, he did meet with no other, but that so he found it; and that he could not convey it into another man*." Thus he. Surely our God is still and ever the same. Were not we wanting to ourselves, he would not fail to lead us into all truth; and, the truth being but one, we should happily meet in the same truth: so as now, truth and peace should kiss each other, and we should be blessed in both.

SECT. 5.

The Fifth Private way of Peace: To comply with our brethren so far as we safely may.

FIFTHLY, it shall mainly conduce to peace, that we COMPLY WITH OUR BRETHREN SO FAR AS WE SAFELY MAY; that we walk along lovingly with them, so far as our way goes together; and then, since we must needs, part friends.

That great Council of Milan, however faulty†, yet begins well in their Synodical Letters to Eusebius‡: "Your dear love is not ignorant, how precious the bond of charity and peace is to be esteemed." Even those, that break the peace, cannot but praise it: how much more should they bid for it, that are true friends to it; and to that amicableness, that attends it!

We cannot keep too much aloof from those without, except it be to fetch them in. How happy were it, if herein we could learn wit of enemies! What a cautious Decree was that, which Clement the VIIIth, made for his Italians, That none of them might dare to dwell in any place under heretics, save where there is an allowed Church with a Roman-Catholic Priest: and that no man should be sent forth for traffic to any heretical country, under the age of twenty-five years§! And no less strict and wary was that of Gregory the XVth. That no heretic might, under what pretence soever, hire a house, or make his abode in Italy and the isles adjacent‖. Neither was it without great cause, that the Synod of Laodicea, about the year 364 decreed, That no Christian should celebrate festivals with Pagans, Heretics, Jews¶. And the Council of Ravenna no less wisely ordered, That no Jew might come forth of his doors, without a roundel of yellow cloth upon

* Jo. Gerson. De Distinctione Verarum Visionum à Falsis. *Novi hominem, qui post multum tentationis, &c.* † *Concil. Mediolan. univers. reprobatum.*
‡ Lit. Synod. Eusebio Fratri. *Non ignorat charissima nobis dilectio tua, &c.*
§ Provinc. Clem. VIII. an. 1596. ‖ Greg. XV. anno 1622. *In locis Italiæ et adjacentium Insularum, &c.* Vide Gavant. V. Hæresis. ¶ Synod. Laod. juxta Caranz. Can. 37 et 39.—Hospin. de Origine Fest. Christ.

his upper garment; that he might be distinguished, for avoidance*. I love the zeal of those Athenians, that would not wash in the same bath with the persecutors of Socrates†.

But this wise averseness from the known enemies of peace, may and must be accompanied with a friendly correspondence with differing brethren. The same Spirit, that delivered up Hymeneus and Alexander unto Satan, *that they might learn not to blaspheme*; 1 Tim. i. 20: gives charge; *Him, that is weak in the faith, receive you*; Rom. xiv. 1. He, that every where preached the abrogation of the Law of Ceremonies, yet, to comply with the Jews, yielded to a legal purification; Acts xxi. 26. He, that found so many and gross errors in the Church of Corinth, as one would think might have been enough to have estranged him from it, continues the professions of his dearest respects of it; and salutes them, *Saints*. We must so deal with our brethren, as Mariana tells‡ us it is the fashion of his Society; whose drift, saith he, is, that what is mis-done by them, may be covered with earth, and withheld from the notice of the world.

Our charity, therefore, will teach us, to mince those errors, which we cannot suppress; and, where we find extremes, to strain both parts what we may, to meet in the mean.

Thus did the holy African Bishops, in the case of a dangerous distraction that fell out in their Church§. Felicissimus, a loose and over-kind schismatic, stiffly held, That all, that were lapsed in the heat of persecution, should be presently received without any penance at all. Novatian, on the other side, maintains the contrary extreme; That none of those, who had thus offended, should at all be received into the bosom of the Church. The Church is miserably divided. Hereupon forty-two Bishops are, by the authority of Cyprian, assembled in a Synod. They, walking in a midway, define, That peace and reconciliation is not to be denied to those, which had fallen in time of persecution, that humbly sued for their re-admission, if they had once fulfilled the penances enjoined them: and this they decreed should be ordinarily done, unless the peril of present death or the instant persecution of tyrants required a dispensation. Thus the godly Fathers did evenly cut a thread, betwixt the rigour of the one side, and the over-indulgence of the other: and, as wise arbitrators are wont to do, detracted something from either part, that they might set peace between both.

Thus, in the modern question concerning the extent of the benefit of Christ's death and passion, while some teach that Christ died for all mankind, others that he died only for some, viz. those that believe, a learned and discreet Moderator‖ goes between both; and, yielding something to either part, reconciles both.

* Conc Raven. Rubric. 23. † Plutarch. ‡ *Totum societatis regimen est, &c.* 1. Mariana de Morbis Societatis, eorumque Remediis. § Vide in Concil. Carthag. 2. sub Cornelio Notas Bini. ‖ D. Twisse in his Animadversions upon D. Jackson.—And, to the same effect, D. Rivetius Disp. 6. de Redemptione.

"When we say Christ died for mankind, we mean," saith he, "that Christ died for the benefit of mankind. Now, let this benefit be distinguished, and contentions hereabouts will cease: for, if this benefit be considered as the remission of sins, and the salvation of our souls; these are benefits obtainable only, upon the condition of faith and repentance: on the one side, no man will say that Christ died to this end to procure forgiveness and salvation to every one, whether they believe and repent, or no; so, on the other, none will deny but that he died to this end, that salvation and remission should redound to all and every one, in case they should repent and believe: for this depends upon the sufficiency of that price, which our Saviour paid for the redemption of the world, &c. And to pay a price sufficient for the redemption of all and every one, is, in a fair sense, to redeem all and every one." Thus he: so as neither part can find fault with the decision, and both must rest satisfied.

The like must we endeavour to do, in all differences, that are capable of an atonement: for, certainly, it is too much stiffness, to stand ever on the height; and to give* no quarter in matter of opinion; like those peremptory† Egyptians, which, in several cities, would either profess to abhor the crocodile, or to deify him. There is a mean, if we could hit on it, in all, save fundamental, quarrels; worthy to be the scope of all our charitable desires: which if we could attain and rest in, we and the Church of God should be peaceable and happy‡.

SECT. 6.

The Sixth Private way of Peace: To let fall our own interest for the public.

LASTLY, the ready way for private persons to procure peace, is, that every one should be willing TO LET FALL HIS OWN INTEREST FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF THE PUBLIC.

What are we, but members of one and the same§ community, whether of Church or Kingdom? and what member is there, that doth not willingly yield up itself to the preservation of the whole body? This natural intercourse there is between the very elements themselves, that each of them is ready to forsake his own place, for the benefit and advantage of the universe.

* Tul. Academ. 4. *Quod gravius ferremus, si quisquam ullam disciplinam Philosophiæ probaret, præter eam quam ipse sequeretur.*

† —— *Cum solos credit habendos*
Esse Deos, quos ipse colit.——Juven. Sat. xv. [Combos Tentyra.]

‡ *Patres nostri, non solùm ante Cyprianum vel Agrippinum, sed postea, salubberrimam consuetudinem tenuerunt, ut quicquid divinum atque legitimum in aliquâ hæresi vel schismate integrum reperirent, approbarent potiùs quàm negarent.* August.

§ *Cato, cujus mores erant, Lucano referente,*
Toti genitum se credere mundo.—Gers. de Ang.

Hereupon it was, that the Chosen Vessel was content to undergo, not labour and sorrow and care only, but pain too: *I now rejoice*, saith he, *in my sufferings for you; and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh, for his body's sake, which is the Church;* Col. i. 24. If what we do or suffer be not with relation to the common good, we forget our interest and lose our thanks: and if, in our undertakings, we find a certain Self stand in the way of our public ends, he must be shouldered out or trampled upon, if ever we expect a comfortable issue.

How commendable was that example of Maximianus*, a worthy Bishop; who, being lately converted from the schism of the Donatists to the Catholic Church, when he saw that he could not be peaceably received of the people, out of a godly care of the common peace, openly professed before the Fathers of the Milevitan Council, that he was willing to renounce his interest in his bishoprick; and besought them that another might be chosen in his place: whereupon, the cause was examined, his abdication admitted, his brother Castorius substituted in his room, and the Church quieted!

The want of this pious ingenuity is that, which hath been the cause of all the distempers, both raised and continued in the Church of God; in that, prime and leading persons have been fastened so close to their own concernments, that they might not be induced to leave their hold for the public good.

Surely, it is that, for which those, who have sat at the stern of the Roman Church must look to give a heavy account: for the general Reformation of the whole Church, as one† said truly, hath, like the rabbet's skin, stuck thus long at the head. Their ingenuous Cassander confesses no less. Woe be to them, who, for the carnal respects of worldly honours and profits, *withhold the truth in unrighteousness;* Rom. i. 18: forcibly blindfolding God's people, that they may not see themselves deceived: bearing themselves so high upon that insolent pretence of Infallibility, that it is no less than spiritual treason once to question it; and, upon that ground, hating to relent in the least misprision, lest they should seem to yield the Church of Rome might err. Where shall the blood of those millions of souls, which have miscarried through this arrogant usurpation, be required, but at those hands, who would rather chuse the world should perish, than their crest should fall? What should I touch at those secular violences, that, upon this only ground, have been raised against the Henrys and Fredericks of old; or those bloody contestations of Guelfes and Gibelines; or those cruel competitions of succeeding Anti-Popes? Cardinal Peron‡ and the last Age can say enough of the proceedings of Clement the VIIth against Henry the VIIIth of England, and of Leo the Xth against the Protestants of Germany; which,

* Concil. Milevit. Vide Notas Binii. Maximianus Vagiensis Episc.

† M. Struther, in his Looking-Glass for Princes. ‡ Card. Peron. Es Lettres au Roy de France, pour la Pacification entre la Pape et la Seigneurie de Venise.

saith he, have been attended with the loss and ruin of many great provinces: and our own eyes can testify sufficiently, what courses have been held against our two last glorious sovereigns and the Venetian State: and all these, on no other ground, than this, that proud stomachs would not abide to remit ought of their unjustly-challenged greatness.

Neither is it otherwise, in matter of judgment. It is possible I may meet with some private opinion, which I may strongly conceive more probable than the common; and, perhaps, I may think myself able to prove it so: shall I presently, out of an ostentation of my own parts, vent this to the world; and strain my wit, to make it good by a peremptory defence, to the disturbance of the Church; and not rather smother it in my own bosom, as thinking the loss much easier, of a conceit, than of peace?

That of Mr. Calvin is very exemplary; who, writing to Olevian* concerning the giving of the holy eucharist to the sick; and having shewed reasons for that practice, shuts up with, *Scis, Frater*, "You know, Brother, that the fashion is otherwise with us: I bear with it, because it is not profitable to contend:" a charitable rule, and worthy to be universal; and indeed little other, than apostolical: for, after order given for the covering of the heads of women in the congregation, St. Paul shuts up with this conclusion, *But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God;* 1 Cor. xi. 16.

There are too many, who, like the trout or salmon, love to swim against the stream: and too justly may we take up the old complaint of Alvarus Pelagius, "He is no knowing man, now-a-days, that devises not some novelties of opinions†." Should I gather up and present to the world a just catalogue of those wild conceits, that have been broached in these later times, I should shame the present Age, and amaze the following. Certainly, these spirits are no friends to peace; else, they would not so vainly pursue their own interest, against the public.

It is the praise of the Netherlands, and that whereto we do justly ascribe their strange prosperity, that they look not so much at their own particular advantages, as the raising of the stock of the honour and wealth of the public State ‡. If such could be our respects to the Church and causes of God, both they and we should flourish; which, contrarily, neglected have involved us in those unspeakable miseries which we suffer.

Shortly, then, to sum up what we have said concerning this part of our Discourse; if WE SHALL EFFECTUALLY LABOUR AGAINST THE GROUNDS AND CAUSES OF CONTENTION, *Pride, Self-Love, Envy, Covetousness:* if WE SHALL COMPOSE OURSELVES TO A TEMPER FIT FOR THE ENTERTAINMENT OF PEACE; that is, if *we shall be humble and meek-minded*, if *obedient to our spiritual guides*, if *charitable to our brethren*, if *not too peremptory in our own apprehensions:* if, thirdly, WE SHALL PUT OFF UNNECESSARY QUESTIONS AND SET

* Calv. Ep. 365. Episc. Brechen. de Perthanis Articulis. † *Non est sciens hodie, qui novitates non invenit.* ‡ The. Scot his Belgick Pismire.

BOUNDS TO OUR CURIOSITY: if WE SHALL PRAY AND LABOUR FOR FURTHER ILLUMINATION IN ALL REQUISITE TRUTHS; and shall, therefore, walk conscionably after the light which we have received: if WE SHALL COMPLY, SO FAR AS WE LAWFULLY MAY, WITH OUR CHRISTIAN BRETHREN: if, lastly, WE SHALL BE CONTENT TO LET FALL OUR OWN INTEREST, OUT OF A TENDER RESPECT TO THE PUBLIC, we shall tread comfortably in the PRIVATE way of peace; and shall, in our particular stations, have contributed our due endeavours to the tranquillity and happiness of the Church of Christ.

CHAP. III.

OF THE WAYS OF PEACE, WHICH CONCERN THE PUBLIC.

IT remains that we now address ourselves to the laying forth of the PUBLIC ways of peace, such as concern Authority to walk in.

SECT. 1.

The First Public way of Peace: To suppress the beginnings of Spiritual Quarrels. Which shall be done, if (1.) *The broachers of new opinions be by gentle means reclaimed:—if* (2.) *The means of spreading Infection be timely cut off: which are* [1.] *The Society of the Infected;* [2.] *The Press:—if* (3.) *Disturbers of Peace; either* [1.] *By sowing strife, and broaching new Opinions; or* [2.] *By abetting Quarrels, and pertinaciously maintaining dangerous Errors, be timely suppressed.*

THE first whereof shall be, a careful endeavour TO SUPPRESS THE BEGINNINGS OF SPIRITUAL QUARRELS: a practice, which we may well take out from the authors of our municipal laws; who have taken so strict order against menacing words, which might draw on a fray, and routs and riots which may tend towards insurrection.

Seldom do great mischiefs seize upon us wholly at once; but proceed, by certain degrees, to their full height: and, as it is in corruption of manners, so also in depravation of judgment, no man is worst at the first. It is a true word, which Gerson cites out of the Decree*, That schism disposes towards heresy: for he, that flies off from the Church, must pretend errors, lest he should seem to have made a causeless separation; and, where there is a discord, there will be strife†. As that Father said of sin, we may truly say of errors, the beginnings of them are bashful; neither dare they, at their first rise, shew what they mean to be.

* Jo. Gerson de Schismat. † *Discordia, ubi animus est dissentiendi; lis, ubi, necessitate urgente, rem nostram repetimus.* Moschon. de Judiciis.

It shall be therefore the best wisdom of Authority, to check the first motions of contention; and to kill this cockatrice in the egg. Remedies, seasonably applied, are seldom ineffectual.

(1.) And this shall be done, first, *if, when any heterodox or irregular doctrine shall be let fall, it be taken at the first rebound; and the author and avower fairly dealt withal, and strongly convinced of his error; that so he may, by all gentle and loving persuasions, be reclaimed, before the leaven of his misopinion have spread any further, to the souring of others.*

It shall be needless, to urge how requisite it is, that all brotherly kindness should, in such case, be used. Our proceedings in the cure of the painful tumours of the body, direct us what to do in the spiritual: we lay suppling and mollifying plaisters to these angry swellings, ere we make use of the lancet. I find it a praise given to one Comitulus, a Bishop of Perusia, that he did *paterne et materne loqui cum Clero;* "treat with his Clergy with the gravity of a father and the affection of a mother*." So should erring souls be dealt with. Rigour and roughness may not have place here: much less, cruelty and violence.

Our story tells us of one Ithacius, a Spanish Bishop, that, out of his zeal, had obtained of the King, that the Priscillianists, a dangerous and perfidious sect, should be punished with death. A holier Bishop than he, whom the following Ages graced with the name of a Saint, Martin†, took part with him in that zealous project: whom yet the rest of the Clergy and Church cried down for intolerably bloody. Upon their clamours, and the monition of an angel, as the story says, Martin bethinks himself of the oversight; recants his error; and professes, that ever since he had given way to that cruel sentence, he had sensibly found in himself a decay of that power of grace which he had formerly felt.

What kind of courtesy shall we hold it in our Romish Casuists‡, that they advise their Confraternity of the Blood of Christ, whom the Italians call their Confortatori; whose office is to attend their Heretics, our Martyrs, with tapers and images to their stakes; not to give way, by any means, that at their holy candles any torches should be lighted for the kindling of that fire, wherewith the Heretics should be burned. Their bloodthirsty cruelty adjudgeth us to that flame, which their merciful taper shall not kindle. They, that are prodigal of their faggots, stick to lend a light; and think themselves well discharged of our blood, which their wax would not be accessary unto. Certainly, these butcheries will never be owned in heaven. Fire and sword are no fit means to settle or recover truth§.

What will ye? saith the blessed Apostle: *shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love and in the spirit of meekness?* 1 Cor. iv. 21.

* Barth. Gavant. Praxi Synod. Diocesanæ. Annotat. Sect. 2. † Vide Notas in Concil. Treverens. ‡ Les Confratres de la Sangre de Christo. Martin Vivald. Cas. Buc. § *Religionem imperare non possumus, quia nemo cogitur ut credat invitus.*

He speaks not of a sword: he, whose weapons were not carnal, had nothing to do with that: he speaks of love and meekness; and, at the worst, of a rod *.

And, as he does, so he charges: *Brethren, if any man be overtaken in a fault*, whether of judgment or manners, *ye, which are spiritual, restore such an one, in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also shouldst be tempted;* Gal. vi. 1.

A man of understanding, saith the wisest king, *is of a cool spirit;* Prov. xvii. 27. margin: not fiery and furious. Christ is *the Lamb of God;* Satan is a *Lion;* John i. 29. Rev. v. 6. 1 Pet. v. 8. the meekness of this Lamb is that, which we must imitate; not the ferity of that Lion. "Be not a lion in thine own house," saith the Wise Man; Ecclus. iv. 30: nor yet in the house of God; as knowing, that the greatest authority in God's Church is given *for edification, and not for destruction;* 2 Cor. x. 8. and that the destroying of the body is not the way to save the soul.

It was the praise of Proclus, Bishop of Constantinople, that he dealt mildly with all men; and, so much the sooner, drew men to Christ, with the cords of love.

True belief may be wrought by persuasion; by compulsion, never †. Let strong arguments therefore be fetters, wherewith the erring soul shall be bound: let the two edged sword of the Word and Spirit strike deep into the heart, and divide betwixt the man and his error; so, besides the Church's peace, I know not whether the agent or the patient be more happy. *Brethren*, saith St. James, *if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him, let him know, that he, which converteth the sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins;* James v. 19, 20.

(2.) In the second place, for the seasonable prevention of those mischiefs and disturbances which follow upon erroneous doctrines, it shall be requisite, *to take timely order for cutting off the means and occasions of further spreading the infection thereof* ‡: which are generally these two, either Personal Society, or Communication of Writings.

[1.] In a bodily contagion, we hold it not safe to suffer the sick Persons to converse with the whole; but remove them to a pest-house, remote from the vicinity of others: a practice, which was also commanded by God himself to his ancient people the Jews, in case of their leprosy, which was equally, though not so deadly, infectious. Why should we not be so wise, for the preservation of souls, from the plague of pernicious doctrines §?

It is a true word, that of the Wise Man, "He, that toucheth pitch, shall be defiled therewith;" Ecclus. xiii. 1: no less truly seconded by Tertullian: "Who doubts not," saith he, "but that faith is continually blurred and defaced by the conversation of in-

* *Paulus cum ense et libro pingitur.—Mucro furor Pauli liber est conversio Sauli.* Durand. Ration. l. i. c. 3. † Socr. l. vii. c. 40.

‡ *Si serpat venenum, et non sequatur illico aut idolum, &c.* Bern. Ep. 158.

§ *Qui cum lupis est cum lupis ululat.* Gerson.

fidels * ?" Neither is it much other, that St. Paul fetches out of the heathen poet Menander †, and thereby makes canonical. Most seasonable and needful therefore was that charge of Moses, in the case of Korah's desperate mutiny, *Get you out from about the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. Depart, I pray you, from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs; lest ye be consumed in all their sins;* Num. xvi. 24, 26. And the Chosen Vessel, to the same purpose, unto the Christians under the Gospel, revives the like charge from Isaiah; *Come out from among them; and be ye separate; and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you;* 2 Cor. vi. 17. Isa. lii. 11 ‡.

Out of the foreknowledge of this danger it was, that God gave order for the riddance of the seven nations out of the Land of Promise: *They shall not dwell in thy land, lest they make thee sin against me;* Exod. xxiii. 33. And when, afterwards, it appeared that some of those forbidden people were still harboured amongst his Jews, the charge is renewed by Joshua, *Come not among these nations, that remain amongst you; neither make mention of the name of their gods;* Josh. xxiii. 7.

In imitation whereof, it hath been the wisdom of Christian lawgivers, not to allow the residence of heretical persons within their territories. Amongst the rest, that general, and, as it was called, Trabal law was famous, which forbids all heretics, Arians, Macedonians, and others, to convene or abide upon any part of Roman ground §. And the godly Church-governors of former Ages, have herein not so much followed as led the way to this just zeal of Christian Emperors. The contestations of Athanasius and Ambrose, in this kind, are better known, than that they need any particular relations ‖. In all which, they approved themselves such as they are called, *good shepherds*, by a seasonable separation of the diseased and scabby sheep from the rest of their flock, that they might escape a common infection.

Upon this ground it is, that both our laws and constitutions have ever straitly inhibited the private convenings of many persons disaffected to the religion established ¶: who, by this means, take the opportunity of diffusing their mis-opinions, to the woeful distraction of the Church; and to whet the edge of each other against the received truth: the inconveniencies whereof upon a liberty, not given but taken, we have sufficiently felt, and can never sufficiently bewail.

* *Quis non dubitat obliterari quotidie fidem commercio infideli?* Tert. ad Uxorem. † 1 Cor. xv. 33. Φθείρουσι, &c.

‡ *Firma tutela salutis est scire quem fugias; periculosa res est hæresis, &c.* Chrys. Hom. 19. in Matth.

§ *Nusquam in Romano solo conveniendi morandique habeant facultatem.* Ex Justiniano Pamel. de Diversis Relig. non admittendis. c. 18.

‖ *Cum schismaticis nec secularis panis debet esse communis, multo minùs spiritualis.* Cypr. l. i. Ep. 6.

¶ *Nulla cum malis convivia vel colloquia misceantur; simusque ab iis tam separati, quàm sunt illi ab Ecclesiâ Dei profugi.* Cypr. l. i.

Certainly, there is no less venom in error, than in vice; neither are moral evils more dangerous and mortal, than the intellectual. What good magistrate can endure, that, according to the Prophet's complaint, *Men should assemble themselves by troops in the harlots' houses?* Jer. v. 7. Amongst the Abassins, although their courtezans have public stipends from the common stock; yet they are not allowed to come into their cities *: so as those, which connive at their sin, yet endure not their frequence. How can it be less sinful or unsafe, for those, who are defiled with their own works, and go a whoring after their own inventions, to be suffered to pack together the spiritual corruptions of themselves and many thousands?

[2.] But there is nothing, that hath so much power to poison the world, as the Press; which is able, in one day's warning, to scatter a heresy over the whole face of the earth. In the times of our forefathers, when every page and line was to pass the leisure and pains of a single pen, books were geason; and, if offensive, could not so easily light into many hands to work a speedy mischief. Error, that could but creep then, doth now fly; and, in a moment, cuts the air of several regions.

As we are, therefore, highly beholden to that witty citizen of Mentz † for his invention of this nimble Art of Impression, whereby knowledge hath not been a little propagated to the world; so we have reason to rue the inconveniencies, that have followed upon the abuse of this so beneficial a practice. For, as all men are apt to write their own fancies; so they have, by this means, had opportunity to divulge their conceits to all eyes and ears: whence it hath come to pass, that those monstrous opinions, which had been fit only to be condemned to perpetual darkness, have at once both visited and infected the public light, to the infinite scandal of the Church and shame of the Gospel ‡. Never age or nation hath had more cause to cry out of this mischief, than this of ours. I hold my hands from the particulars, that I may not seem to accuse in a Treatise of Peace.

Our cunning adversaries may teach us wit, in this behalf. What devices have they had, to prevent and avoid the danger of those books, which they either dislike or suspect! What courses they have taken, for the prohibiting of those authors, which they censure as heretical; and for the expurging of those of their own, whom they dare not deface; I refer my reader to the painful and useful observations of D. James, who hath laboured above others in this necessary subject. But I may not omit those cautions, which their wise jealousy hath prescribed, in this kind, over and besides his notification. It is, therefore, decreed by them §, That

* Pory's Introduct. to Leo Afric.

† *Joan. Fast. Moguntinus civis, &c. non plumali cannâ neque aerâ: sed arte quâdam perpulchrâ, Petri manu, pueri mei, &c.* Subscriptum libro Tulli Ciceronis de Officiis, in Biblioth. Col. Emanuelis, et alibi.

‡ *Quis non horreat profanas novitates et verborum et sensuum?* Bern. Ep. 190.

§ Pius IV. in Id. Regal. 10. Gavant. V. Librorum Editio.

the approbation of any book to be published, shall be given by the Bishop of the Diocese; and that an authentical copy of that book which is to be printed, subscribed by the hand of the author, be left in the hand of the licenser: that a book, formerly published, shall not be re-printed, without a new licence: that no book shall be printed, under the feigned name of any author:* that the purged book of any censured author, if it be re-printed, shall bear in the front the title of the author, and the note of his censure: that, in the beginning of that book, mention shall be expressly made, both of the prohibition of the old copy, and the emendation of the new: † that those, which have prohibited books, shall not be discharged by burning them; but must necessarily bring them to their superiors. Yea, so wary they are, in preventing all possibilities of peril, that even the works of their own greatest champion, Cardinal Bellarmin, are not allowed a promiscuous sale and perusal, because they do but relate, though with confutation, the opinions and arguments of the heretics ‡. Yea, more than so, all translations of the Council of Trent, into French and other languages, are peremptorily forbidden §: and all Glosses, Commentaries, Annotations, and Scholias, upon the Decrees of that Council, besides from those that are deputed by the Pope, are inhibited, under the pain of suspension, to any Prelate, whosoever shall presume to publish them ‖. Yea, lastly, that which one would think should exceed all the belief of a Christian, the very Bibles, set forth in vulgar tongues, are so forbidden to be either read or kept in men's houses, that neither the Bishops, nor Inquisitors, nor the Superiors of the Regulars can give any licence to whatsoever person to that purpose¶: neither may so much as the Abridgments of the historical parts of that Sacred Book be allowed **.

If they be thus cautious to forbid the best of books, for their own advantage; what a shame shall it be for us, to be so slack and supine, as not to restrain the worst writings, to the infinite disadvantage of the Gospel!

How happy then would it be for God's Church, if, by the special and joint care of Christian Princes and States, there might be a general interdiction of this lawless licentiousness of the Press; and that, under the highest penalties, it might be confined to none but necessary, safe, and orthodox discourse! which till it be effectually done, it is not possible but that schisms and heresies must, at pleasure, dilate themselves; to the corrupting of unstable minds, and to the destruction of the common peace.

(3.) Thirdly, for the timely suppressing of spiritual quarrels, it

* Clem. VIII. ib. Gavant. † Barbos. de Potest. Ep. ibid. Gavant. ‡ Sir Edwin Sands's Relation. § Cong. Concil. 2 June 1629. ‖ Pius IV. anno 1563. Tit. Conc. Trid.

¶ *Biblia, vulgari linguâ, edita, non possunt legi, neque retineri; neque Episcopi, neque Inquisitores, neque Regularium Superiores, dare queunt licentiam.* Clem. VIII. in Ind. Prohib.

** *Neque Compendia historica Bibliorum.* Gavant. V. Scriptura.

is most requisite for Authority, *to punish the wilful disturbers of peace.*

[1.] Such are those, in the first place, that will be sowing of strife where none grows *; whether by broaching new opinions, or despitefully falling upon innocent and well-deserving persons.

Terpander was fined at Lacedæmon, for putting one string to his harp more than was usual †; and yet that, perhaps, made the music better: how worthy are they to smart, that mar the harmony of our peace, by the discordous jars of their new and paradoxal conceits! *Serva depositum*, was the charge given to Timothy; 1 Tim. vi. 20. and the prayer of the Church is, *Renew our days as of old*; Lam. v. 21. If any Athenian spirit have a mind to tell us of new doctrines, that the Church of God never knew, I wish he may do it upon the same terms, that the Thurians of old ordained for the deviser of new laws, that is, with a cord ready tied about his neck.

As new opinions broached are cause of much discord, so are also wrongful and calumnious aspersions cast upon the innocent. *A son of Belial*, saith Solomon, *diggeth up evil; and in his lips there is a burning fire. A froward man soweth strife; and a whisperer separateth chief friends*; Prov. xvi. 27, 28. and, elsewhere, *Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out; so where there is no whisperer the strife ceaseth*: Prov. xxvi. 20. Certainly, if lewd tongues be not curbed with wholesome laws and round execution, it is in vain to hope for peace ‡. The best of men lie ever the openest to the wickedest calumnies. How doth the man after God's own heart cry out of the virulency of his slanderers! how passionately doth he pray, *Deliver my soul, O Lord, from lying lips and from a deceitful tongue. What shall be given to thee, or what shall be done to thee, thou false tongue? Sharp arrows of the mighty, with coals of juniper*; Ps. cxx. 2, 3, 4. Holy Cyprian hath dung cast in his face by the name of Coprianus. Athanasius is no better than Sathanasius: would you think that man, so worthy of immortality as his name justly imports, should pass for a sacrilegious person, a profane wretch, a bloody persecutor, a blasphemer of God? yet these are his titles, from his malicious opposites: whose resolution is, "As for Athanasius and Marcellus, who have impiously blasphemed against God, and have lived as wicked miscreants, and are thereupon cast out of the Church and condemned, we cannot receive them to the honour of Episcopacy §." So as we may justly, in their behalf, take up that complaint of Optatus ‖, *Episcopos gladio linguæ jugulâstis; fundentes sanguinem, non corporis, sed honoris*; that is, "Ye have slain your Bishops with the sword of your

* *Qui, ubi nihil est litium, lites serunt.* Plaut. † Plut. Cust. of Lacedæmon. ‡ *Jam autem ad scenam ipsam prodimus, et cum impudicissimis ridemur.* Greg. Naz. Orat. 1.

§ *Nos Athanasium et Marcellum, qui in Dominum impiè blasphemantes scelerati vixerunt, expositos olim et damnatos non possumus in Episcopatus honorem recipere.* 80 Episc. in Pseudo-Synod Sardicensi. ‖ Optat. Milevit. l. iii.

tongue; spilling the blood, not of their body, but of their honour and reputation."[2] To this head must be referred those bitter and infamous libels *, which are mutually cast abroad every day; even by some, who lay claim to a more strict Christianity: deeply wounding, not more each other's fame, than the public peace. These evils cry loud to Authority for redress; without which, what hope of peace?

[2.] In the second rank of disturbers of peace, are those, who do nourish, foment, and abet the quarrels once raised; and pertinaciously maintain those dangerous errors, which they find set on foot: for, indeed, it is not falseness of judgment that makes a heretic, but perverseness of will †; neither is heresy any other, than an error in faith with obstinacy ‡. They are much mistaken, that slight the mistakings of the understanding, as no sins: rather, as that faculty hath more of the man, than the other inferior; so the aberrations of that must be more heinous. But, if the will did not concur to their further aggravation, in adhering to a falsity once received, they might seem rather to pass, with God and good men, for infirmities; but the least falsehood, justified, proves odious to both: how much more in so precious a subject, as religion!

The zeal of some old Casuists carried them too far, in resolving heresy to be such a crime, as the seal of confession itself might not privilege for concealment §. One of their later ‖ said well, That he wished that man might be turned salamander, to live perpetually in the fire, that should reveal what was spoken to his ear, out of remorse of conscience.

But, certainly, it cannot be denied, that heresy, thus described, is a grievous sin; against that God, who is truth and goodness itself; and against that Church, which he hath graciously espoused to himself: but how far, and which way, to be proceeded against, is a matter of deep and serious consideration.

For the determination whereof, I should think it necessary to distinguish of heresy, whether mere or mixed. Mere heresy I call that, which is divested of other circumstances; a sole error in matter of faith stiffly resolved on, without any other concurrent malignity: mixed, that, which is intermingled with other mischievous ingredients, as blasphemy, infectious divulgation, seditious disturbance, malicious complottings, violent pursuit, treacherous machinations, and the like.

The former, as it is a spiritual sin; so it is to be proceeded against, in a spiritual way. Brotherly admonishing must lead the way: strong conviction must follow ¶: and, in the failing of both these, Church-censures must be sought to as the last refuge. Bo-

* *Tractatus* φιλεγκλήμονες. Hieron.

† *Non enim error de S. Scripturis, sed et pertinax erroris defensio facit hæreticum.* Def. Fir. Staph. ‡ *Error in fide, cum pertinaciâ.* § *Hæresis est crimen, quod nec confessio celat.* ‖ M. Vivald.

¶ *Ut ubi interficiendi sunt errores, interficiantur homines, &c.* Musc. Loc. Com. cap. de Hæret.

dily violences may have no place here; since faith is to be persuaded, not forced. Never any Christians, till the Roman Church, in these latter times, offered to shed blood for mere errors of opinion *. It is not for nothing, that the Holy Ghost sets her forth decked in purple and scarlet; Rev. xvii. 4. as foreseeing her deep-died in the blood of Innocents. Every of her trivial determinations must be matter of faith †; and every resolute opposition to matter of faith must be heresy; and every heresy must be expiated with blood. Oh, the ignorance or stupidity of the ancient Fathers of the Church, which could never hit on this sure remedy of error, and vindication of truth ‡! never had learned the true sense of *Hæretirum de-vita*, which is now revealed to wiser posterity! In the mean time, since but the days of Thomas Arundel, then Archbishop of Canterbury, who kindled the first fire of this kind within this kingdom §, what stacks have been spent every where, as the fuel of martyrdom! It is proper for a cruel religion, to live upon blood ‖. For us, we will save whom we can; but, whom we cannot, we will not kill: remembering what God said of old concerning the days of the Gospel; *They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord;* Isa. xi. 9.

The latter of them hath no reason to be exempted from bodily punishments; no, not from the utmost of all pains, death itself ¶: as that, which, besides its own intrinsical mischief, draws in with it seven devils, worse than itself. If it be *hæreticalis blasphemia*, as the Casuists term it, it proclaims war against heaven; and is justly revenged, by the sword of God's vicegerents upon earth. If it be attended with schism, perturbances, seditions, malicious practices, it tends to the setting of whole kingdoms on fire; and, therefore, may be well worthy of a faggot. No man should smart for erring; but, for seducing of souls, for embroiling of states, for contemptuous violation of laws, for affronts of lawful authority, who can pity him, that suffers **? Certainly, there cannot be a greater mercy to Church or Commonwealth, than, by a seasonable correction of offenders, to prevent their ruin ††. It must be the regard to

* Thuan. Prœm in Hist.—Sir Sim. Dewes's Primitive Practice. Sect. 5.

† *Si divina lex persuadere non possit, humana authoritas ad veritatem revocare nequit.* Aug. ad Crescon.

‡ *Non de more Orthodoxæ Ecclesiæ, quæ homines persequi non solet, &c.* Socrat. l. vii. c. 3. § Vide ib. Sir Sim. Dewes.

‖ ——*Temerè sed tradere letho,*
Non est Christigenum, furvi sed regis Averni.

Naogeorgus. Minas Celsus Senens. sect. 2. In Hæret. coercendis quatenus progredi liceat.

¶ *Hereticí corrigendi, ne pereant; coercendi, ne perimant.* Bern. de Consid. l. iii. c. 1.

** *Pertinaciter errantes, et alios secum in errorem abducere inque erroribus retinere contendentes, blasphemi, et perturbatores, imò eversores Ecclesiarum, jure cædi possunt.* Balling. Dec. 2. ser. viii. Min. Cels. sect. 2.

†† *Pariter crudelis uterque, qui parcit cunctis et nulli.* Jos. Iscan. de Bello Trojano. l. i.

the welfare and peace of the public, that must regulate all proceedings this way. I remember what Erasmus said concerning Luther: "Surely," said he, "I would rather the man should be corrected, than destroyed: but, if they will needs make an end of him, whether they would rather have him roast or boiled, I gainsay it not. It is a light loss, that is of one single man; but yet care must be had of the public tranquillity *." Thus he, as supposing his antagonist erroneous enough; yet not to be dealt with in extremity of rigour, out of the regard of the public safety †. And, indeed, this consideration is it, that must either hold our hands, or move them. Even in spiritual matters, as well as civil, that rule is eternal, *Salus populi suprema lex* ‡.

Thus then, to recollect our Discourse; If *authority shall timely labour, by fair means, to reclaim the broachers of new and singular opinions:* if *it shall be careful to cut off the occasions of further spreading the infection, arising therefrom;* whether the society of the infected, or the divulgation of their writings: if, lastly, *it shall be prudently impartial in punishing wilful disturbers of the peace;* whether those, that sow strifes where none are, by venting new and offensive paradoxes, by raising unjust slanders upon the innocent; or those, that foment and abet the strife once raised; especially those, that pertinaciously stand upon the maintenance of gross errors: it shall have taken a ready course, for CHECKING THE FIRST MOTIONS AND SUPPRESSING THE BEGINNINGS OF QUARRELS.

SECT. 2.

The Second Public means of Peace: Order for sure grounds to be laid by Catechizing.

IN the second place, it shall much conduce to the keeping of public peace, and the prevention of the dangers of the breach thereof by exorbitant doctrines, IF ORDER BE TAKEN BY AUTHORITY, THAT SURE GROUNDS OF RELIGION BE LAID IN THE HEARTS OF GOD'S PEOPLE.

It was the observation of that wise and learned King James, of blessed memory, whose judgment and knowledge in matter of Divinity surpassed all the Princes in the Christian world, that history hath recommended to us; that the reason, why so many of ours were perverted to Popish superstition, was, for that the people were not well grounded, by due catechizing in the principles of Christian Religion: and, truly, this I learned in my attendance, amongst many other lessons, from that incomparable Prince, that there is no employment in the world, wherein God's Ministers can so profitably bestow themselves, as in this of plain and familiar ca-

* *Certè correctum hominem mallem quàm extinctum &c.* Eras. Alex. Secretario Comitis Nassovici. † *Virgâ ovem, baculo lupum.* Bern. Sentent.

‡ The people's safety is the highest law.

techizing. What is a building, without a foundation? If this ground-work therefore be not surely laid, all their divine discourses, for such their sermons are, lie but upon the loose sand; and are easily washed away, by the insinuative suggestions of false teachers.

A man, that is well grounded in the doctrine of the First Commandment, knows, that he must reserve all divine honour, trust, devotion to his God alone; and that he may not cast any part of it away upon the creature. How can such an one choose but cast a scornful smile upon a Romish seducer, that shall tell him, that, by virtue of this precept, he is to be a devout client to the Saints, and especially to the Blessed Virgin Mary, and to his Angel-Guardian; as Jo. Gerson hath confidently taught us * ?

He, that is well grounded in the doctrine of the Second Commandment, how can he but abhor the bodily representations of the Blessed Trinity; and spit at Aquinas, for teaching that the image is to be adored with the same worship, that is due to the archetype? How must he needs bless himself, at the strange collection of a Valentia, because St. Peter cries out of *abominable idolatries*, that therefore there are some idolatries under the Gospel, not abominable! And, when he finds all human devices, which can be obtruded upon Christians as parts of God's worship, justly damned in that law; how can he chuse but cry out, with holy Cyprian, *Quæ ista obstinatio, &c.* "What obstinacy, what presumption is this, to prefer human traditions, before God's own Ordinance † !"

He, that is thoroughly instructed in the doctrine of the Third Commandment, and hath learned to tremble at the Sacred Name of the Almighty; how can he digest those graceless decisions of some Romish Casuists ‡, that frequent swearing and cursing, if it be out of custom, is but venial; that it is lawful to equivocate in our oaths; that the solemn oaths of fealty may be dispensed with; that the Dreadful Name of God may be used, in the unwarrantable exorcisation of the creatures; that our invocations upon God do not necessarily require understanding, or devotion?

How can he, that is thoroughly informed of the will of God in the Fourth Commandment, be induced to prefer a man's day to God's? to slight that Evangelical Sabbath, the legal pattern whereof had wont to be so sacred? The Jewish Doctors esteemed their Sabbath the Queen of Feasts; and all the other festivals, but as her handmaids: who, that is well instructed, can abide that the maid should take the wall of her mistress? or would endure to hear of a Pope Silvester §, that durst presume to alter the day, decreeing that Thursday should be kept for the Lord's Day through the whole year; because on that day Christ ascended into heaven, and on that day instituted the blessed Sacrament of his body and blood?

How can he, that hath well learned the Fifth Commandment di-

* Jo. Gerson. de Præcept. Decal. c. 5.

† *Quæ ista obstinatio est, quæve præsumptio, humanam traditionem divinæ dispositioni anteponere!* Cyp. ad Pompeium contr. Epist. Stephani.

‡ Rodriguez. Cas. Consc.

§ Hospinian. de Festis Christ. ex Antonio et Petro de Natalibus.

gest that hard morsel of Rome *, that the Pope hath power to absolve subjects from their lawful allegiance to their Sovereign; that he hath power to depose Kings at pleasure; that he can arm a subject with power to murder his King; that children may dispose of themselves into Religious Orders, without or against the will of their parents?

How can he, that knows what belongs to the Sixth Commandment, but abhor to think of the streams of blood, that have been shed upon pretence of religion; to recal the slaughters of Merindol and Cabriers, the massacres of France, the powder-plot of England, the late Irish cruelties, and the subornations of the bloody assassinates of kings and princes?

How can he, who hath been taught the exact rule of chastity in the Seventh Commandment, but hate to hear of the public toleration of stews; and of fornication, in some cases, less faulty than honest matrimony?

The like may be said of the rest of the Precepts of the Royal Law of the Almighty, which is the most perfect rule of our obedience.

And as for matter of Belief, were the foundation surely laid of the doctrines of faith, contained in the Apostolic, Nicene, Athanasian Creeds; and of the doctrine of the Sacraments, briefly comprized in our publicly allowed Catechism; I see no reason but to think our people so sufficiently defenced against the danger of error, that no heretical machinations could be able to batter or undermine them.

And, surely, if ever there were or can be time, wherein the necessity of this duty of catechizing were fit to be enforced, it is this, upon which we are fallen: when the souls of Christian people are so hard laid at, not only by Popery, Anabaptism, Antinomianism, Pelagianism; but by the confounding and hellish heresies of Socinianism, Antitrinitarianism, Ne-arianism; prodigious mischiefs; tending, not only to the disturbance of our peace, but to the utter destruction of Christianity: when we may truly say to every soul, upon the letting loose of Satan, as Simeon said to his pillars before the earthquake, "Stand fast; for ye shall be shaken." Shortly, if this duty be neglected, we may preach our lungs out, if we will; but with little effect. When we have spent all our wind upon the ears of our people, their hearts will be still apt to be carried away with *every wind of doctrine;* Eph. iv. 14.

SECT. 3.

The Third Public way of Peace: Means appointed for strong conviction of Error.

NOTHING can so much break the Church's peace, as Error. This is, indeed, that hellish monster, which the herculean power of Authority, both spiritual and civil, must serve both to conflict and subdue.

* *Papa potest deponere Regem, si est effeminatus, i. si multùm sequatur mulieres.* Repertorium Panormitani, à Do. de Montalvo V. Papa.

But this infernal brood yields much variety.

There are errors so gross and foul, that, in a consciousness of their own deformity, they have hid their heads; and withdrawn themselves from that light, which is as hateful to them as they are to it. The foolish Jews *, when they saw Mahomet arising in such power, they were straight ready to cry him up for their Messiah: but, when they saw him eat of a camel (Lev. 11. 4:), they were as blank, as when they saw the hoped issue of their late Jewish virgin turned to a daughter. So blockish was that error of the Anthropomorphites † of old: though I know not whether, in some sort, refurbished by Conradius Vorstius. Such was that of the Patripassiani, whom Alamundarus, the King of the Agarens, though but a new convert to Christianity, made ashamed of themselves ‡: that witty prince made himself very sad and pensive: being by some of those heretics asked the reason of that his heaviness, he told them that he heard, that Michael, the Archangel, was dead; and, when they cheered him up, assuring him that an angel being a spirit could not die, he chokingly replies, "How then are you so foolish, to think that the Father and God of Spirits, the Deity itself, could be capable of death?" Such was that of the Charinzarii, who, in the other extreme, held one whole person of Christ suffering, while the other person looked on; and celebrated the memory of their Sergius's dog, Arzibur, with an yearly fast §. Such was the exploded heresy of that madman, who held all heresies truth.

But there are errors, and those are most dangerous, so cunningly contrived by the subtlety of Satan, so countenanced with shew of reason and antiquity, and so over-laid with colour of Scripture-authority, that a wise man might easily mistake them for truths.

It must be, therefore, the care of sovereign power, in order to the public peace, to make provision, in the third place, THAT THERE MAY BE MEANS OF A STRONG AND IRREFRAGABLE CONVICTION OF ERROR.

Which shall be done, if there be a designation and encouragement of able men, wholly set apart for polemical studies. For this part of Divinity requires more than a piece of a man: and it is not to be expected, however our age have yielded some happy in this kind, that those, who wholly addict themselves, according to the exigence of that calling, to the study and practice of Popular Divinity, should attain to the perfection of Controversory. The combination of some such select heads might be infinitely serviceable to God's Church.

It is great pity, therefore, that the late Chelsian project was suffered to fall to the ground; whereof had not that judicious King, of Blessed memory, seen that very great use might have been made, he had not condescended to so gracious privileges, as his Majesty was pleased to enrich it withal. That wise and learned

* Eutrop. Hist. l. xviii.

† Accused by Epiphanius of simpleness and rusticity. ‡ Forcarelus.

§ Pratcol. Elench. Hæres. l. iii. 15.

Prince well observed, how great an advantage our adversaries have of us, in this kind; who come upon us with conjoined forces, while we stand upon single resistances *: and, therefore, without a marvellous providence of the Almighty, might have verified the old word, *Dum singuli pugnant, universi vincuntur.*

Blessed be God, the world hath had ample proofs of the falsehood of that calumny of Erasmus, which he casts upon our profession, in his Epistle to Bilibaldus: *Ubicunque regnat Lutherus;* "Wheresoever Luther reigns," saith he, "there straight follows the destruction of all learning: for there is nothing that they seek for, but a Living and a Wife †." Could he have lived to these days, very shame would have crammed those words down his throat; and would have forced him to confess, that eminence of learning and zeal of reformed religion can well live and flourish together: he should have seen and heard such learned advocates plead for the Protestant profession, that his ingenuity could not choose but yield them the advantage of the Bar.

But, if these heads and hands have been so powerful, alone; what would they have done, united together? Certainly, none of these upstart prodigious heresies could stand before them; nor breathe so long under their hands, as to work a disturbance to the Church's peace.

But, if we may not be so happy, as to see such a sure course established for the preservation of truth and peace, it will be requisite yet, that order be taken, that none may be allowed to enter into the lists, to maintain the combat with heretical seducers, but those, which are approved for able champions: for, certainly, there cannot be a greater advantage to the prevalence of error, than a weak oppugnation. I remember St. Augustin professes, this was it that heartened him, and made him to triumph in his former Manicheism, that he met with feeble opponents; and such, as his nimble wit was easily able to overturn. When, therefore, any bold challenger shall step forth, and cast down his gauntlet in defiance of truth, it is fit he be encountered with an assailant, that hath brawn in his arms, and marrow in his bones: not with some weak and wearish combatant, whose heart may be as good, as his hand is feeble; that shall thereupon betray the better cause with an impotent managing. It is true, that the power of God manifests itself, many times, in our weakness; and doth great matters, by the smallest means: but it is not for us to put God upon miracles. As in all other occasions, so in this, we must be careful to make use of the best helps, and then look up to heaven for a blessing. May this be done, the victory over error shall be the settlement of peace.

* *Concordia simul juncta vinci non potest.* Cypr. Cornelio Fratri.

† *Ubicunque regnat Lutherus, ibi literarum est interitus: duo tantùm quærunt, Censum et Uxorem.* Eras. Bilib.

SECT. 4.

The Fourth Public way of Peace: Imposition of silence in some cases, both upon Pulpits and Presses.

BUT the most available and surest of all the public ways of peace, is, IN SOME CASES AN IMPOSITION OF SILENCE UPON BOTH THE PARTIES CONTENDING.

For the making good whereof, it must be laid down for an unfailing ground.

1. That all truths are not fit to be at all times urged. There can be no time, wherein it can be warrantable to deny a truth; but there may fall times, wherein some truth need not be pressed. Our Blessed Saviour, who was *the true light that enlighteneth every one that cometh into the world*, could have irradiated his disciples at once, with the perfect knowledge of all things: but, as it was his will only to measure them out their meet stint of spiritual understanding; so he thought fit to impart it to them by degrees; plainly professing, *I have many things yet to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now;* John xvi. 12: and there is the same reason, of not revealing truths, and not enforcing them. The great Apostle of the Gentiles hath taught us the necessary distinction of doctrines; that some are meat, and some are milk: and himself was careful to observe it. *And I, brethren*, saith he, *could not speak to you, as unto spiritual, but as to carnal men, even as unto babes in Christ: I have fed you with milk, and not with meat; for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able;* 1 Cor. iii. 1, 2. His practice is our instruction. What should a sucking child do with a knife and a trencher? Doubtless then, all truths are not for all times, for all persons.

2. It must be yielded, That the occasion of the infinite questions and controversies in religion, is the scarce finite subdivisions of points of Divinity, into those numberless atoms of disquisition, whereinto curious heads have minced it. Truth, when it is in a lump, is carried away with ease; but, when it is cut in a thousand pieces, it is not easily set together: some parcels may, perhaps, be missing; others, disordered.

It was the observation of learned Erasmus long ago, now seconded with too much experience, that this multiplication of School-points is it, that hath rendered Divinity so perplexed, and the Church so unquiet.

Now then, the remedy must tread in the same steps with the disease. As, therefore, it might make much to the universal peace of God's Church, that positive Divinity should be generally reduced to that primitive simplicity, wherein it was presented to the Christians of the first and purest times; so, it might greatly conduce to the peace of particular Churches, that, where litigious questions arise with fair probabilities on both parts, and sides are taken, and

the rent not to be sewed up by any satisfactory decision, then, and there, the mouth of altercation should be stopped with a straitly-enjoined silence: let that truth sleep quietly, on whether side soever it lies. Or, if the difference of opinion be so general that it cannot be kept in, that an Adiaphorous act, as of old, be decreed for a mutual indemnity; that neither part might censure or condemn other for their diversity of judgment. Both these practices for peace we might learn of our wise adversaries, that guide the helm of the Roman Church.

Much stir there was in their Schools, now in this present age, about the efficacy of preventing grace, depending or not depending on man's free-will. Their doctors took parts: the quarrel grew hot: the business was devolved to the determination of Pope Clement VIII: for five years together, the case was every day disputed: the issue was, that oracle of the Chair decreed, That it should be free for both parts to hold to their own tenet, without censuring either side of error or temerity. So, for the time, the quarrel ceased *. But when, soon after, the Doctors of either School, striving too eagerly for the maintenance of their own opinion, brake forth into distemper, it was out of due regard to peace straitly commanded, that no Doctor on either part should publish any writing whatsoever, in which the agreement of efficacious grace and free-will should be so much as argued †. "So," saith my author, "that decertation was shut up," *congruentissimo silentio*, "in a most meet silence ‡." Although, what agitations there have been since of this question, and what endeavours of their acute Franciscus de Arriba § to salve up the matter by new distinctions, it is not now seasonable for us to relate.

But far more coil there hath been, both in Schools and Church, within some late centuries of years, concerning the sinless conception of the Blessed Virgin: about which, what vehement dimications there have been between the Franciscans and Dominicans, the world too well knows. Aquinas and his followers, more ingenuous authors, are for the one part: ‖ the Council of Basil and the greater number of Schoolmen, for the other; defending, in an impious flattery of that Holy and Blessed Mother of our Lord, that, by the singular grace of the Almighty, she was so kept, that she was never actually under original sin, but was always free from all fault both original and actual. The Dominicans, finding them-

* *Placuit sanctiss. permittere omnibus unius vel alterius scholæ assertum tenere et defendere: jussumque est, ne deinceps aut istam aut illam sententiam erroris vel temeritatis censurâ notaret, &c. Sicque tunc contentiosæ istæ disputationes cessaverunt.*

† *Preceptum est intuitu pacis &c. ne alicujus doctoris opus prælo mandaret, &c.*

‡ *Sicque decertatio illa determinata est congruentissimo silentio.*

§ Franc. de Arriba, Reginæ Christianis. à Confessionibus ad B. P. D. Gregorium XV. Pontif. Max.

‖ *Gloriosam Virg. Dei genitricem Mariam, præveniente et operante divini numinis gratiâ singulari, nunquam actualiter subjacuisse originali peccato; sed immunem semper fuisse ab omni originali et actuali culpâ, &c.* Concil. Basil sess. 36.

selves galled with this unjust determination, fly upon that Council; and plainly say, it hatched a cockatrice *. The matter came so high as to blood: for some of the Dominicans fried at a stake, for the bold opposition to this misconceived privilege of the Holy and Immaculate Virgin †. Pope Sixtus the IVth, perceiving what danger and mischief might follow upon this division, decrees, though not without secret favour to the Franciscans of whose Order he was, that the question should be left free to either part; as that, which was not decided by the Church and See Apostolic ‡: and the Council of Trent professes to second the observation of that constitution of Sixtus, under the penalties therein contained §: so as now Greg. de Valentia concludes, that neither opinion is found to be matter of faith; and that whoever takes either side ought not to be taken for a heretic, or held to offend mortally in the temerity of his opinion.

Besides, some experience our own times have yielded us at home, of the singular benefit of this course. It is not long, since our Church began to be sick of the Belgic disease: I mean the distemper arising from the difference about the Five controverted Articles of the Netherlands. The pulpits and presses laboured of it, in much extremity: it pleased wise and judicious sovereignty, upon knowledge of the woeful effects which had followed those unhappy controversies abroad, to give charge, that those questions should not be further stirred in, whether in sermons or writings; and the Articles of the Church of England should be the just limits of all our public discourse in this kind. And what a calm followed upon this prudent Declaration, our fresh memory can abundantly testify. Were the like order taken in other questions of less importance at the present time, men's hearts would be at more ease, and the Church less disquieted.

To draw up all, therefore, to a head: if, by the power of Authority, THE BEGINNINGS OF QUARRELS MAY BE SUPPRESSED; if SURE GROUNDS OF INSTRUCTION MAY BE LAID IN THE HEARTS OF GOD'S PEOPLE; if POWERFUL CONVICTIONS MAY BE USED TO THE REFRACTORY, and none but able opponents suffered to be employed in the vindication of truth; if, IN MEET CASES, SILENCE MAY BE IMPOSED UPON PULPITS AND PRESSES; we shall have reason to hope for a happy success of these PUBLIC means of peace.

* *Peperisse basiliscum.* Anton. citante Jo. Major.
† Chamier de Peccato Orig. Tom. iii. l. 5. ex Nicol. Baselio.
‡ Sixt. IV. in extravag. Grave nimis de Reliq. et vener. sanct.
§ Decret. Trid. Sess. 5.

CHAP. IV.

A MOTIVE TO PEACE, FROM THE MISERIES OF DISCORD.

Now, that all both private and public agents may be stirred up to do their utmost endeavours, to the making and preservation of peace, it shall be requisite for us, to bend our eyes seriously upon the MISERIES OF SPIRITUAL DISCORD: which, indeed, are so great and many, as no mortal pen is able to express.

Some image whereof we see, and lament to see, in the Civil. Woe is me, what a sad spectacle it is, to see towns and cities flaming; to see the channels running with blood, the fields strewed with carcases of men and horses mingled in blood; to see the hellish fury of a military storm, those clambering up to assail, these tumbling down in assailing; to see the deadly granadoes fly with fire in their mouths; and to see and hear the horror of their alighting; to hear the infernal thunder of mines blowing up, the roaring of cannons, the rattling of drums, the hoarse noise of trumpets; to hear the shrieks of women and children, the groans of the dying, the killing noise of the murderers; shortly, to see and hear the astonishing confusion of every soul engaged either way, in that violent destruction!

Truly, as the story* says of Gensericus and his Vandals in Africk, that they made more waste by fire of the houses of prayer, than of towns and cities; so may I say, in general, of all the instruments of spiritual violence, that they do more scaith to the Church of God, than the bodily agents in an outward and visible war can do, to the Commonwealth.

This mischief is less sensible; but more pernicious. What is the body to the soul? What is this material fire (a mere accension of air) to that of hell? What is the temporal death to an eternal?

It is a woeful case, which Optatus speaks of in that schism of the Donatists: *Inter licet vestrum &c.* "You say it is lawful: we say it is unlawful: betwixt both, Christian souls are staggered, and tossed, and cannot find where to settle †."

And rather worse is that, which Chrysostom bemoans to Innocentius: *Ecclesiæ usque ad genua humiliatæ, populi dispersi, Clerus dilaceratus, Episcopi exules, constitutiones Patrum violatæ:* "The Churches," saith he, "are brought down upon their knees, the people scattered, the Clergy vexed, the Bishops banished, the constitutions of the Fathers violated ‡."

But, far beyond this yet, was that of the Circumcellions, reported by Possidonius §, in pursuance of their Donatism, who exercised horrible cruelties upon the orthodox part; killing some, tor-

* Vict. Persec. Afric. l. i.

† Optat. Milevit. lib. v. *Inter licet vestrum et non licet nostrum, nutant et remigant animæ Christianæ, &c.*

‡ Chrys. Innocentio. § Possidon. in Vitâ August.

turing others; blowing lime and vinegar into the eyes of God's Ministers, and tearing off the breasts of women with pincers.

Yet all these are but flea-bitings, in comparison of the rage of Roman persecution. Who can, without horror, think of the bloody butcheries of the Inquisition; the daily bonfires made of the bodies of God's Saints; the secret massacres; the open wars, that have been and are raised upon these spiritual quarrels? so true is that observation of Gerson *, That there is none so implacable a division, as that, which goes under pretence of religion.

Surely, it is no marvel, that, as our mythologists tell us of old, Discord took it ill that she was not called to the banquet of the celestial powers, but shut out of the doors of heaven; certainly she is fit company for none, but the Furies of Hell: indeed, it is she, that makes them such; yea, she only it is, that turns earth into hell, and, as it were, reduces the world to the first chaos.

Well were it for us, if our own sense did not represent too much of this truth to us. What need we any monitor, to tell us how miserable we are? rather, it is fit we should be put in mind of that grave and godly advice, which holy Chrysostom gives to Innocentius: *Non satis est plangere, &c.* "It is not enough for us to bewail the breaches of the Church; but we had need to make use of our best care and most serious consideration, by what means and by what seasonable counsel this grievous tempest of the Church may be allayed †." Oh, how happy were it, if we would all bend our best thoughts, and improve our utmost endeavours, to this end!

And, as there is no Christian, that may be exempt from this duty; since every one hath some freight in this common bottom: so doth it most of all lie upon God's Ministers, who by their calling should be the *counsellors* and *ambassadors of peace;* Prov. xii. 20. Isaiah xxxiii. 7. 2 Cor. v. 20. according to that of Mercellinus, *Quid tam, &c.* "What can be so agreeable to the rules of religion, as that the ministers of God, whose office it is to bring the tidings of peace to others, should keep the peace among themselves ‡?" It is true, there is a war, wherein they are and must be engaged; *bellum contra vitia;* "a war against wickedness:" not only as the heralds of the Almighty, to denounce judgments; but, as St. Paul styles them, as *good soldiers of Jesus Christ*, 2 Tim. ii. 3. to beat down sin both in themselves and in others. The weapons of this warfare are spiritual; and such is the warfare itself. How far it is fit for them, to have their hand in a bodily and external warfare, according to the example of worthy Zuinglius, whom Oecolampadius defends and excuses §; and of the most learned Chamier;

* Jo. Gerson de Schismate. &c.

† Chrys. Innocent. *Non satis est plangere; sed opus est etiam ut cura geratur, et spectetur quâ ratione, quove consilio, gravissima Ecclesiæ tempestas sedetur.*

‡ *Quid tam religiosis conveniens institutis, quàm ut inter se sacerdotes pacem quam necesse est aliis annuntiare, conservent?* Marcel. p. Ep. 2.

§ *In Helvetiis non est novum, ut cum signis præcipuis egrediantur etiam primi sacerdotes, etiam armati, &c.* Oecolamp. Martino Frechto.

who were both unhappily slain in arms: here is no place to argue. Sure I am, that, as their embassy is the *Gospel of Peace*; Rom. x. 15. Eph. vi. 15: so their main employment should be the making of peace betwixt God and men, betwixt men and men, both in spiritual and civil occasions; and, if there be any, who, instead of *lifting up their voice like a trumpet, to shew God's people their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sins*, Is. lviii. 1. shall make themselves on either part the trumpets of war and bloodshed, let them see, as the prophet Gad said, what answer they will return to him that sent them; 2 Sam. xxiv. 13.

Doubtless, our main errand to the world is peace; and woe be to us, if we do it not! but, in vain shall we pretend to carry that, which we have not; to carry peace unto others, when we have none amongst ourselves; to make that abroad, which we want at home. It was the charge of our Saviour to his disciples, but especially to the Twelve, who had a little before quarrelled for precedency, *Have peace one with another*; Mark ix. 50: as well knowing their, either peace or enmity, to be a leading case.

Woe is me *for the divisions of Reuben!* but more, for the great *thoughts of heart*, that follow them; Judges v. 15. For may we not too truly say, as Chrysostom said of all evils in general, that all our miseries have begun from the Sanctuary? While the captains fight, how can the common soldiers stand still? Hold your hands, for God's sake, and for the Church's sake, O all ye who are the spiritual leaders of God's people. Give me leave to say to you, as Luther to the Helvetians, in the Sacramentary quarrel; *Satis jam altercatum et clamatum est*; "We have had altercation and clamour enough: if any good might have been done by clamour and altercation, we have suffered on both parts more than enough *." Oh, that we could at last now entertain that gracious and obsecratory charge of the blessed Apostle of the Gentiles, *Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing; and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment*; 1 Cor. i. 10.

But, if it cannot be hoped for in this distraction of opinion, that we should meet in the same mind and judgment; yet let us endeavour *to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace*; Eph. iv. 3. Let not the differences of opinion beget alienation of affections. Let not the heat of boisterous affections break forth into public and mortal concertations. For, as Nazianzen † wisely presseth to the Synod of Constantinople, what can be more absurd, than that we, declining the darts of our enemies, should fall into mutual incursions, one upon another; and thereby waste our own forces, and make sport to our adversaries?

* *Satis jam altercatum et clamatum est: si quid modò altercando et clamando potuit proficì.* Luth. Resp. ad Confess. Basil. ab Helvet. declaratum. Jo. Iselerus de Belli Eucharistici Diatur.

† *Quid enim absurdius, &c* Greg. Naz. ad Synod. Constantinop. apud Theod. l. v. c. 8.

Is it not to us, that the Apostle speaks, under the name of his Galatians. *If ye bite and devour one another, take heed lest ye be consumed one of another?* Gal. v. 15. What Christians were ever more palpably guilty of this cruelty? How are we come, from snarling to biting, from biting to worrying each other! What means this deadly rage, amongst those, that profess the dear name of one Saviour; and that call one Church, Mother? Let us look upon brute beasts, and blush. *Parcit cognatis maculis* *: Who ever saw a lion or a tiger fall upon one of his own kind? Even savage bears agree well together: yea, which is the observation of our Bromyard †, where a whole legion of evil spirits lodged in one man, yet they fell not out. And why will we, who are brethren, do the work of enemies?

I know every one of us will plead a defence of truth: but, is it such a truth, as is worth bleeding for? I have learned from good authority, that, of old, by the common law of England, it was felony of death to kill a man, *se defendendo* ‡; however the rigour of that law is since mitigated: and, even still, it is required that our heels, if possible, should prevent the use of our hands. The rule of our Casuists upon assaults, is still, *Cum moderamine inculpatæ tutelæ*; "With the management of a harmless defence." Were this duly observed both for our tongues and pens, how quiet, how happy were the, now distracted, Church of God!

Certainly, God abides none but charitable dissensions: those, that are well grounded and well governed, grounded upon just causes and governed with Christian charity and wise moderation; those, whose beginning is equity, and whose end is peace. If we must differ, let these be the conditions. Let every of God's ministers be ambitious of that praise, which Gregory Nazianzen gives to Athanasius §, to be an adamant to them that strike him, and a loadstone to those that dissent from him: the one, not to be moved with wrongs: the other, to draw those hearts which disagree. So, *the fruit of righteousness shall be sown in peace of them that make peace*; James iii. 18. So, the God of Peace shall have glory, the Church of God rest, and our souls unspeakable consolation and joy in the day of the appearing of our Lord Jesus. To whom, with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, one Infinite and Incomprehensible God, be all praise, honour, and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

* Parcit cognatis maculis similis fera: quando
Leoni fortior eripuit vitam leo? Juven. Sat. xvi.

† Brom. V. Discordia. ‡ Dalton p. 214. § Greg. Naz. Orat. 21.

THE

BALM OF GILEAD:

OR,

COMFORTS FOR THE DISTRESSED;

BOTH MORAL AND DIVINE.

BY JOSEPH, BISHOP OF NORWICH.

TO ALL

THE DISTRESSED MEMBERS

OF

JESUS CHRIST, WHERESOEVER:

WHOSE SOULS ARE WOUNDED WITH THE PRESENT SENSE OF THEIR SINS, OR OF THEIR AFFLICTIONS, OR WITH THE FEARS OF DEATH AND JUDGMENT:

THE Author humbly recommends this Sovereign Balm, which God hath been pleased to put into his hands for their benefit; earnestly exhorting them to apply it carefully to their several sores, together with their faithful prayers to God for a blessing upon the use thereof: not doubting, but, through God's mercy, they shall find thereby a sensible ease and comfort to their souls, which shall be helped on by the fervent devotions of the unworthiest servant of God and his Church,

J. H. *B. N.*

THE BALM OF GILEAD:

OR,

THE COMFORTER.

CHAP. I.

COMFORTS FOR THE SICK BED.

The Preface—Aggravation of the Misery of Sickness.

WHAT should we do in this vale of tears, but bemoan each others' miseries? Every man hath his load: and well is he, whose burden is so easy, that he may help his neighbours. Hear me, my son. My age hath waded through a world of sorrows. *The Angel, that hath hitherto redeemed my soul from all evil,* (Gen. xlviii. 16.) and hath led me within few paces of the shore, offers to lend me his hand to guide thee in this dangerous ford, wherein every error is death. Let us follow him, with an humble confidence; and be safe, in the view and pity of the woeful miscarriages of others.

Thou art now cast upon the bed of sickness; *roaring out all the day long,* for the extremity of thy pain, Ps. xxxii. 3: measuring the slow hours, not by minutes, but by groans. Thy *soul* is *weary of* thy *life,* (Job x. 1.) through the intolerable *anguish of* thy *spirit;* Job vii. 11:—Of all earthly afflictions, this is the sorest. Job himself, after the sudden and astonishing news of the loss of his goods and children, could yet bear up, and bless the God that gives and takes; Job i. 21: but, when his body was tormented, and was made one boil; now, his patience is retched so far, as to curse (not his God, but) his nativity; Job iii. 3. The great king, questioning with his cup-bearer Nehemiah, can say, *Why is thy countenance sad, seeing thou art not sick?* Neh. ii. 2: as implying, that the sick man, of all other, hath just cause to be dejected. Worldly crosses are aloof off from us; sickness is in our bosom: those touch ours only; these, ourselves: here the whole man suffers: what could the body feel, without the soul that animates it? How can the soul, which makes the body sensible, choose but be most affected with that pain, whereof it gives sense to the body? Both partners have enough to do to encounter so fierce an enemy. The sharper assault requires the more powerful resistance. Recollect thyself, my son; and call up all the powers of thy soul, to grapple with so violent an enemy.

SECT. 1.

The freedom of the soul.

THY body is, by a sore disease, confined to thy bed:—I should be sorry to say, thou thyself wert so. Thy soul, which is thyself, is, I hope, elsewhere. That, however it is content to take a share in thy sufferings, soars above to the heaven of heavens; and is prostrate before the Throne of Grace, suing for mercy and forgiveness; beholding the face of thy Glorious Mediator interceding for thee.

Woe were to us, if our souls were coffined up in our bosoms, so as they could not stir abroad, nor go any further than they are carried; like some snail or tortoise, that cannot move out of the shell. Blessed be God, he hath given us active spirits, that can bestir themselves, while our bodies lie still; that can be so quick and nimble in their motions, as that they can pass from earth to heaven, ere our bodies can turn to the other side.

And, how much shall we be wanting to ourselves, if we do not make use of this spiritual agility; sending up these spirits of ours from this dull clay of our bodies to those regions of blessedness, that they may thence fetch comfort to alleviate the sorrows of their heavy partners!

Thus do thou, my son, employ the better part; no pains of the worse can make thee miserable. That spiritual part of thine shall, ere long, be in bliss, while this earthen piece shall lie rotting in the grave. Why shouldst thou not, even now before thy separation, improve all the powers of it to thy present advantage? Let that still behold the face of thy God in glory, while thy bodily eyes look upon those friends at thy bed-side, which may pity thee, but cannot help thee.

SECT. 2.

The Author of sickness; and the benefit of it.

THOU art pained with sickness:—Consider seriously, whence it is, that thou thus smartest. *Affliction cometh not out of the dust;* Job v. 6. Couldst thou but hear the voice of thy disease, as well as thou feelest the stroke of it, it saith loud enough, *Am I come up hither without the Lord to torment thee? The Lord hath said to me, Go up against this* man, *and* afflict *him*; 2 Kings xviii. 25. Couldst thou see the hand that smites thee, thou couldst not but kiss it.

Why, man, it is thy good God, the Father of all Mercies, that lays these stripes upon thee. He that made thee, he that bought thee at so dear a rate as his own blood, it is he, that chastiseth thee: and canst thou think he will whip thee, but for thy good?

Thou art a father of children, and art acquainted with thine own bowels: didst thou ever take the rod into thy hand, out of a pleasure that thou tookest in smiting that flesh, which is derived from thine own loins? was it any ease to thee, to make thy child smart and bleed? Didst thou not suffer more, than thou inflictedst? Couldst thou not rather have been content to have redeemed those his stripes, with thine own? Yet, thou sawest good reason to lay on; and not to spare, for his loud crying and many tears; Prov. xix. 18. and canst say thou hadst not loved him, if thou hadst not been so kindly severe. And, if we, that are evil, know how to give loving and beneficial correction unto our children; how much more shall our Father, which is in heaven, know how to beat us to our advantage! so as we may sing under the rod, with the blessed Psalmist, *I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right; and that, of very faithfulness, thou hast afflicted me*; Ps. cxix. 75.

Might the child be made arbiter of his own chastisement, do we think he would award himself so much as one lash? yet, the wiser parent knows he shall wrong him, if he do not inflict more; as having learned of wise Solomon, *Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell*; Prov. xxiii. 14. "Love hath his strokes," saith Ambrose, "which are so much the sweeter, by how much they are the harder set on."

Dost thou not remember the message, that the two sisters sent to our Saviour; *Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest, is sick?* John xi. 3. Were it so, that pain, or sickness, or any other the executioners of Divine Justice should be let loose upon thee to tyrannize over thee at pleasure, on purpose to render thee perfectly miserable, there were just reason for thy utter disheartening: now, they are stinted, and go under commission; neither can they be allowed to have any other limits, than thy own advantage.

Tell me whether thou wouldst rather be good, or be healthful: I know thou wouldst be both; and thinkest thou mayest well be so. Who is so little in his own favour, as to imagine he can be the worse for faring well? But he, that made thee, looks farther into thee, than thine own eyes can do: he sees thy vigour is turning wanton; and, that if thy body be not sick, thy soul will: if he, therefore, find it fit to take down thy worse part a little for the preventing of a mortal danger to the better, what cause hast thou to complain, yea rather not to be thankful? When thou hast felt thy body in a distemper of fulness, thou hast gone to sea on purpose to make thyself sick; yet thou knewest that turning of thy head and stomach would be more painful to thee than thy former indisposition: why should not thy all-wise Creator take liberty to cure thee, with an afflictious remedy?

SECT. 3.

The vicissitudes of health.

THOU art now sick:—Wert thou not before, a long time, healthful? Canst thou not be content to take thy turns? Job ii. 10. If thou hadst not more days of health than hours of sickness, how canst thou think thou hadst cause to repine? Had the Divine Wisdom thought fit to mitigate thy many days' pain with the ease of one hour, it had been well worthy of thy thanks; but, now that it hath beforehand requited thy few painful hours with years of perfect health, how unthankfully dost thou grudge at the condition!

It was a foul mistake, if thou didst not from all earthly things expect a vicissitude: they cannot have their being, without a change. As well may day be without a succession of night, and life without death, as a mortal body without fits of distemper.

And how much better are these momentary changes, than that last change of a misery unchangeable! It was a woeful word, that Father Abraham said to the damned glutton, *Son, remember, that thou in thy life-time receivedst thy good things, and Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented;* Luke xvi. 25. O happy stripes, wherewith we are chastened of the Lord, that *we may not be condemned with the world!* 1 Cor. xi. 32. O welcome fevers, that may quit my soul from everlasting burnings!

SECT. 4.

Sickness better than sinful health.

THOU complainest of sickness:—I have known those, that have bestowed tears upon their too-much health; sadly bemoaning the fear and danger of God's disfavour, for that they ailed nothing: and our Bromiard * tells us of a devout man in his time, that bewailed his continued welfare as no small affliction; whom, soon after, God fitted with pain enough. The poor man joyed in the change; and held his sickness a mercy: neither, indeed, was it otherwise intended, by him, that sent it. Why are we too much dejected with that, which others complain to want? Why should we find that so tedious to us, which others have wished?

There have been medicinal agues, which the wise physician hath cast his patient into, for the cure of a worse distemper. A secure and lawless health, however nature takes it, is the most dangerous indisposition of the soul: if that may be healed by some few bodily pangs, the advantage is unspeakable.

Look upon some vigorous gallant, that, in the height of his spi-

* Brom. Sum. V. Infirmitas.

rit and the heat of his blood, eagerly pursues his carnal delights; as thinking of no heaven, but the free delectation of his sense: and compare thy present estate with his. Here thou liest, groaning, and sighing, and panting, and shifting thy weary sides, complaining of the heavy pace of thy tedious hours; while he is frolicking with his jocund companions, carousing his large healths, sporting himself with his wanton mistress, and bathing himself in all sensual pleasures: and tell me, whether of the two thou thinkest in the happier condition. Surely, if thou be not shrunk into nothing but mere sense, if thou hast not cast off all thoughts of another world, thou shalt pity the misery of that godless jollity; and gratulate to thyself the advantage of thine humble and faithful suffering, as that, which shall at last make thee an abundant amends by yielding thee *the peaceable fruit of righteousness;* Heb. xii. 11.

SECT. 5.

The greater sufferings of holier men; and the resolutions of heathens.

THY pain is grievous:—I apprehend it such, and pity thee with all my soul. But let me tell thee it is not such, but that holier men have suffered more.

Dost thou not hear the great precedent of patience crying out from his dunghill, *Oh, that my grief were throughly weighed, and my calamities laid in the balance together! for now it would be heavier than the sand of the sea: therefore my words are swallowed up. For the arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poison whereof drinketh up my spirits: the terrors of God do set themselves in array against me?* Job. vi. 2, 3, 4.

Dost thou not hear the man after God's own heart speak of *the voice of his roaring?* Ps. xxii. 1. Dost thou not see him, that shrunk not from the bear, the lion, the giant, *drenching his bed with his tears?* Ps. vi. 6.

Dost thou not hear the Faithful crying out, *I am the man, that hath suffered affliction by the rod of his wrath, &c. Surely against me is he turned: he turneth his hand against me all the day. My flesh and skin hath he made old: he hath broken my bones;* Lam. iii. 1, 3, 4.

Might I not easily shew thee the Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, the great favourites of heaven, some on the gridirons, others in boiling caldrons; some on the spits, others under the saws; some in the flames, others crashed with the teeth of wild beasts; some on the racks, others in fiery furnaces: most of them in such torments, as, in comparison whereof, thy pains are but sports?

Yea, what speak I of these mortal, and, at the best, sinful men; when thou mayest see the Son of God, the Lord of Life, the King of Glory, *God blessed for ever*, sweating drops of blood in his dread-

ful agony; and mayest hear him cry upon the tree of shame and curse, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*

Alas, what are we capable to suffer, in proportion of these tortures? Who are we, that we should think much to share with the best of God's Saints; yea, with the dear and eternal Son of his Love, our ever Blessed Redeemer? Had not God found this the way to their heaven, they had not trod so deep in blood: why do we grudge to wet our feet, where they waded?

Yea, if, from these holy ones, thou shalt turn thine eyes to some mere Pagans, let me shew thee the man, whom we are wont to account infamous for voluptuousness, Epicurus, the Philosopher; who, on his dying day, when he lay extremely tormented with the stone in the bladder, and a tearing cholic in his bowels, as it were gasping for life: yet, even then, writing to his Idomenius, can, out of the strength of his resolutions, profess his cheerfulness, and can style even that day blessed. It was the same mouth, that could boast that if he were frying in the brazen bull of Phalaris, he could there find contentment. What should I tell thee of a Mutius Scævola, who, in a glorious revenge, voluntarily burns off his own right-hand; not without the envy and pity of his enemies? or of a Regulus, that, after so high a provocation, offers himself to the worst of the merciless fury of his tormentors? "Why shouldst thou think it strange," saith wise Seneca, "that some men should be well pleased to be scorched, to be wounded, to be racked, to be killed? Frugality is a pain to the riotous: labour is a punishment to the lazy: continence is a misery to the wanton: study is a torture to the slothful. All these things are not, in their own nature, difficult; but we are feeble and false-hearted."

Shall these Pagans attain to this height of magnanimity, out of the bravery of their manly resolutions; and shall we Christians droop and pule under gentler sufferings, while we profess to have moreover the advantage of faith to uphold and cheer us? Poor Heathen souls! they never heard of any gracious engagements of a merciful God to stand by them, and to comfort them: they never had met with those sweet messages from heaven, *Call upon me in the day of thy trouble, and thou shalt glorify me;* Ps. l. 15: *Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest;* Matt. xi. 28: *Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees: Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not; behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence: he will come and save you;* Is. xxxv. 3, 4. They had not the heart of a Job; to say, *I know that my Redeemer liveth;* nor the eyes of a Stephen, to pierce the heaven, and to see their Saviour standing at the right-hand of God: but merely tugged it out, in the strength of their natural courage; heightened with a vain-glorious ambition of the fame, which they did believe would survive them: whereas, we Christians know that we have a God, the Father of all Mercies, to stand by us; a Redeemer, to deliver us; a Comforter, to strengthen and refresh us; sweet and unfail-

able promises, to sustain us; and, at last, a crown of eternal glory, to recompense us.

SECT. 6.

Our sufferings far below our deservings.

THOU art pained with sickness:—Look not at what thou feelest, but at what thou hast deserved to feel. *Why doth the living man complain? Man suffereth for his sin;* Lam. iii. 39. Alas, the wages of every sin is death; a double death; of body, of soul; temporal, eternal. Any thing below this, is mercy. There is not the least of thy many thousand transgressions, but hath merited the infinite wrath of a just God; and, thereby, more torments, than thou art capable to undergo.

What! dost thou complain of ease? Where thou owedst a thousand talents, thou art bidden to take thy bill, and sit down and write fifty; Luke xvi. 6: wilt thou not magnify the clemency of so favourable a creditor? Surely, were every twig, wherewith thou smartest, a scorpion; and every breath, that thou sendest forth, a flame; this were yet less than thy due. Oh, the infinite goodness of our indulgent Father, that takes up with so gentle a correction!

Tell me, thou nice and delicate patient, if thou canst not bear these stripes, how wilt thou be able to endure those, that are infinitely sorer? Alas, what are these to that hell, which abides for the impatient? There, are exquisite pains, without mitigation; eternal pains, without intermission; which thou canst neither suffer nor avoid. Fear them, while thou grudgest at these. Lay thyself low, under the hand of thy good God; and be thankful for a tolerable misery.

How graciously hath the wisdom of our God thought fit to temper our afflictions; so contriving them, that, if they be sharp, they are not long; and if they be long, they are not over sharp; that our strength might not be over-laid by our trials, either way!

Be content, man: either thy languishment shall be easy, or thy pain soon over. Extreme and everlasting are terms reserved for God's enemies, in the other world. That is truly long, which hath no end: that is truly painful, which is not capable of any relaxation. What a short moment is it, that thou must suffer? short, yea nothing, in respect of that eternity, which thou canst either hope for or fear. Smart a while patiently, that thou mayst not be infinitely miserable.

SECT. 7.

The benefit of the exercise of our patience.

THOU complainest of pain:—What use were there of thy patience, if thou ailest nothing? God never gives virtues, without an in-

tent of their exercise. To what purpose were our Christian valour, if we had no enemy to encounter?

Thus long thou hast lain quiet in a secure garrison, where thou hast heard no trumpet but thine own; and hast turned thy drums into a dicing-table; lavishing out thy days in varieties of idle recreations: now, God draws thee forth into the field, and shews thee an enemy: where is thy Christian fortitude, if thou shrink back; and, cowardly wheeling about, chusest rather to make use of thy heels, than of thy hands? Doth this beseem thee, who professest to fight under his colours, who is the great Conqueror of Death and Hell? Is this the way to that happy victory, which shall carry away a crown of glory?

My son, if thou faint in the day of thine adversity, thy strength is but small. Stir up thy holy courage: *Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might;* Eph. vi. 10. Buckle close with that fierce enemy, wherewith thy God would have thee assaulted: looking up to him, who hath said, and cannot fail to perform it; *Be faithful to the death, and I will give thee a crown of life.*

SECT. 8.

The necessity of expecting sickness.

Thou art surprised with sickness:—Whose fault is this, but thine own? Who bade thee not to look for so sure a guest?

The very frame of thy body should have put thee into other thoughts. Dost thou see this living fabric made up, as a clock consisting of so many wheels and gimmers? and couldst thou imagine, that some of them should not be ever out of order? Couldst thou think, that a cottage, not too strongly built, and standing so bleak in the very mouth of the winds, could, for any long time, hold tight and unreaved? Yea, dost thou not rather wonder, that it hath out-stood so many blustering blasts, thus long, utterly unruined? or that the wires of that engine should so long have held pace with time?

It was scarce a patient question, which Job asked, *Is my strength the strength of stones? or is my flesh as brass;* Job vi. 12. No, alas, Job, thy best metal is but clay; and thine, as all flesh, is grass: the clay mouldereth, and the grass withereth: what do we make account of any thing but misery and fickleness, in this woeful region of change? If we will needs over-reckon our condition, we do but help to aggravate our own wretchedness.

SECT. 9.

God's most tender regard to us in sickness.

Thou art retired to thy sick bed:—Be of good comfort: God was never so near thee, never so tenderly indulgent to thee, as now.

The whole, saith our Saviour, *need not the physician; but the sick*. Lo, the physician, as being made for the time of necessity, cometh not but where there is need: where need is, he will not fail to come; Ecclus. xxxviii. 1. Our need is motive enough to him, who himself *took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses*; Matt. viii. 17. Our health estranges him from us. While thou art his patient, he cannot be kept off from thee. *The Lord*, saith the Psalmist, *will strengthen thee upon the bed of languishing. Thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness*; Ps. xli. 3. Lo, the Heavenly Comforter doth not only visit, but attend thee; and, if thou find thy pallet uneasy, he shall turn and soften it for thy repose.

Canst thou not read God's gracious indulgence, in thine own disposition? Thou art a parent of children: perhaps, thou findest cause to affect one more than another, though all be dear enough; but, if any one of them be cast down with a feverous distemper, now thou art more carefully busy about him than all the rest: how thou pitiest him! how thou pliest him with offers and recipes! with what silent anxiety dost thou watch by his couch! listening for every of his breathings; jealous of every whispering, that might break off his slumber; answering every of his groans, with so many sighs; and, in short, so making of him for the time, that thy greatest darling seems the while neglected in comparison of this more needful charge! How much more shall the Father of Mercies be compassionately intent upon the sufferings of his dear children, according to the proportion of their afflictions!

SECT. 10.

The comfortable end of our sufferings.

Thou art wholly taken up with the extremity of thy pains:—Alas, poor soul, thy purblind eyes see nothing, but what is laid close to thee. It is thy sense, which thou followest; but where is thy faith? Couldst thou look to the end of thy sufferings, thou couldst not but *rejoice in tribulations. Let patience have her perfect work*, and thou shalt once say, *It is well for me that I was afflicted.*

Thou mightest be jocund long enough, ere thy jollity could make thee happy: yea, *Woe be to them, that laugh here*; Luke vi. 25: but, on the contrary, *our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding, and eternal weight of glory*; 2 Cor. iv. 17. O blessed improvement of a few groans! O glorious issue of a short brunt of sorrow! What do we going for Christians, if we be nothing but mere flesh and blood? And if we be more, we have more cause of joy than complaint: for while our *outward man perisheth, our inward man is renewed daily*; 2 Cor. iv. 16. Our outward man is but flesh: our inward is spirit; infinitely more noble than this living clay, that we carry about us. While our spirit, therefore, gains more than our flesh

is capable to lose, what reason have we not to boast of the bargain?

Let not, therefore, these close curtains confine thy sight: but cast up thine eyes to that heaven, whence thy soul came; and see there that crown of glory, which thy God holds forth for all that overcome; and *run with patience, the race that is set before* thee, *looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith, who is set down at the right-hand of the throne of God;* Heb. xii. 2: and solace thyself with the expectation of that blessedness, which, if thy torments were no less than those of hell, would make more than abundant amends for all thy sufferings.

SECT. 11.

The favour of a peaceable passage out of the world.

THOU art sick to die, having received the sentence of death in thyself: thy physician hath given thee up, to act this last part alone; neither art thou like to rise any more, till the general Resurrection:—

How many thousands have died lately, that would have thought it a great happiness to die thus quietly in their beds! whom the storm of war hath hurried away furiously into another world; snatching them suddenly out of this; not suffering them to take leave of that life, which they are forced to abandon: whereas, thou hast a fair leisure to prepare thyself for the entertainment of thy last guest; to set both thy house in order, and thy soul.

It is no small advantage, my son, thus to see death at a distance, and to observe every of his paces towards thee: that thou mayst put thyself into a fit posture to meet this grim messenger of heaven, who comes to fetch thee to immortality: that, dying thus by gentle degrees, thou hast the leisure, with the holy Patriarch Jacob, to call thy children about thee, to bequeath to each of them the dear legacy of thy benediction: and that, being encompassed with thy sad friends, now in thy long journey to a far country, though thine and their home, thou mayst take a solemn farewel of them, as going somewhat before them to the appointed happy meeting-place of glory and blessedness: that one of thine own may close up those eyes, which shall, in their next opening, see the face of thy most glorious Saviour; and see this flesh, now ready to lie down in corruption, made like to his, in unspeakable glory.

CHAP. II.

COMFORTS FOR THE SICK SOUL.

SECT. 1.

The happiness of a deep sorrow for sin.

THY sin lies heavy upon thy soul:—Blessed be God, that thou feelest it so: many a one hath more weight upon him, and boasteth of ease.

There is music in this complaint: the Father of Mercies delights to hear it, as next to the melody of Saints and Angels. Go on still, and continue these sorrowful notes, if ever thou look for sound comfort. It is this *godly sorrow, that worketh repentance to salvation, not to be repented of;* 2 Cor. vii. 10.

Weep still, and make not too much haste to dry up these tears; for they are precious, and held fit to be reserved in *the bottle of the Almighty;* Ps. lvi. 8. Over-speeding remedies may prove injurious to the patient: and, as in the body, so in the soul, diseases and tumours must have their due maturation, ere there can be a perfect cure. The inwards of the sacrifice must be three times rinsed with water *: one ablution will not serve the turn.

But, when thou hast emptied thine eyes of tears, and unloaded thy breast of leisurely sighs, I shall then, by full commission from him that hath the power of remission, say to thee, *Son, be of good comfort, thy sins are forgiven thee.*

SECT. 2.

The well-grounded declaration of pardon.

THINK not, this word merely formal and forceless. He, *that hath the keys of hell and of death,* (Rev. i. 18.) hath not said in vain, *Whose sins ye remit, they are remitted.* The words of his faithful ministers on earth are ratified in heaven. Only the priest, under the Law, had power to pronounce the leper clean; Lev. xiii. 3: had any other Israelite done it, it had been as unprofitable as presumptuous.

It is a precious word, that fell from Elihu; *When a man's soul draweth nigh to the grave, and his life to the destroyer, if there be a messenger (of God) with him, an interpreter, one among a thousand, to shew unto that man his uprightness; then he* (i. e. God) *is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down into the pit; I have found a ransom;* Job xxxiii. 22, 23, 24.

Behold, this is thy case, my son: the life of thy soul is in danger of the Destroyer, through his powerful temptations. I am, howsoever unworthy, a Messenger sent to thee from heaven; and, in

* Lev. i. 9. Hebr. Duct. in locum.

the name of that great God that sent me, I do here, upon the sight of thy serious repentance, before angels and men, declare thy soul to stand right in the court of heaven: the invaluable ransom of thy dear Saviour is laid down and accepted for thee: thou art delivered from going down into the pit of horror and perdition.

SECT. 3.

Aggravation of the grievous condition of the patient: and remedies from mercy applied.

"O HAPPY message," thou sayest, "were it as sure as it is comfortable! But, alas, my heart finds many and deep grounds of fear and diffidence, which will not easily be removed. That smites me, while you offer to acquit me; and tells me, I am in a worse condition than a looker-on can imagine. My sins are, beyond measure, heinous: such, as my thoughts tremble at: such, as I dare not utter to the God that knows them, and against whom only they are committed. There is horror, in their very remembrance: what will there then be, in their retribution?"

They are bitter things, that thou urgest against thyself, my son: no adversary could plead worse.

But I admit thy vileness. Be thou as bad, as Satan can make thee: it is not either his malice, or thy wickedness, that can shut thee out from mercy. Be thou as foul, as sin can make thee: yet there is *a fountain opened to the house of David*, a bloody fountain in the side of thy Saviour, *for sin, and for uncleanness*; Zech. xiii. 1. Be thou as leprous, as that Syrian was of old, if thou canst but wash seven times in the waters of this Jordan, thou canst not but be clean: thy flesh shall come again to thee, like to the flesh of a little child; 2 Kings v. 14. thou shalt be, at once, sound and innocent. Be thou stung unto death, with the fiery serpents of this wilderness: yet if thou canst but cast thine eyes to that brazen serpent which is erected there, thou canst not fail of cure.

Wherefore came the Son of God into the world, but *to save sinners?* add, if thou wilt, *whereof I am chief:* thou canst say no worse by thyself, than a better man did before thee; who, in the right of a sinner, claimeth the benefit of a Saviour; 1 Tim. i. 15. Were it not for our sin, what use were there of a Redeemer? Were not our sin heinous, how should it have required such an expiation as the blood of the Eternal Son of God?

Take comfort to thyself, my son: the greatness of thy sin serves but to magnify the mercy of the Forgiver. To remit the debt of some few farthings, it were small thank; but, to strike off the scores of thousands of talents, it is the height of bounty. Thus doth thy God to thee: he hath suffered thee to run on in his books to so deep a sum, that, when thy conscious heart hath proclaimed

thee bankrupt, he may infinitely oblige thee and glorify his own mercy, in crossing the reckoning and acquitting thy soul.

All sums are equally dischargeable to the munificence of our great Creditor in heaven: as it is the act of his justice, to call for the least; so of his mercy, to forgive the greatest. Had we to do with a finite power, we had reason to sink under the burden of our sins: now there is neither more nor less to that, which is infinite: only let thy care be, to lay hold on that infinite mercy which lies open to thee: and, as thou art an object fit for mercy, in that thou art in thyself sinful and miserable enough; so, find thyself, as thou art, a subject meet to receive this mercy, as a penitent believer. Open and enlarge thy bosom, to take in this free grace; and close with thy Blessed Saviour; and, in him, possess thyself of remission, peace, salvation.

SECT. 4.

Complaint of unrepentance and unbelief, satisfied.

"SWEET words," thou sayest, "to those, that are capable of them. But what is all this to me, that am neither penitent nor believer? Alas, that, which is honey to others, is no better than gall and wormwood to me, who have not the grace to repent and believe as I ought."

Why wilt thou, my son, be so unwise and unjust, as to take part with Satan against thine own soul? Why wilt thou be so unthankfully injurious to the Father of Mercies, as to deny those graces which his Good Spirit hath so freely bestowed upon thee? If thou wert not penitent for thy sins, wherefore are these tears? What mean these sighs and sobs, and passionate expressions of sorrow, which I hear from thee? It is no worldly loss, that thus afflicts thee: it is no bodily distemper, that thus disquiets thee: doubtless, thou art soul-sick, my son: thy spirit is deeply wounded within thee; and what can thus affect thy soul, but sin? and what can this affection of thy soul be for sin, but true penitence?

SECT. 5.

Complaint of a misgrounded sorrow, satisfied.

"ALAS," thou sayest, "I am indeed sorrowful for my sin; but not upon the right grounds. I grieve for the misery, that my sin hath brought upon me; not for the evil of my sin: for the punishment; not the offence: for my own danger; not for the displeasure of my good God."

Beware, my son, lest an undue humility cause thee to belie the

graces of God's Spirit. Thou art no meet judge of thyself, while thou art under temptations.

Had not thy sorrow a relation to thy God, why wouldest thou thus sigh towards heaven? why would thy heart challenge thee for unkindness in offending? why dost thou cry out of the foulness, not only of the peril of thy sin? what is it, that makes the act of sin to be sinful, but the offence of the Divine Majesty? How canst thou then be sorry that thou hast sinned, and not be sorry that thou hast offended?

Tell me, what is it, that thy conscience primarily suggests to thee, in this deep impression of thy sorrow? Is it, thou shalt be punished? Or is it not rather, thou hast sinned? And, were it put to thy choice, whether thou wouldst rather enjoy the favour of God with the extremest smart, or be in his displeasure with ease; whether wouldst thou pitch upon? Or, if liberty were tendered unto thee, that thou mightest freely sin without the danger of punishment; whether doth not thy heart rise at the condition, as ready to flee in the face of the offerer?

Besides fear and horror, dost thou not find an inward kind of indignation at thy miscarriage; and such a hatred of thy sin, that were it to be done again, if it were possible to be hid from God and men, and if there were not a hell to avenge it, thou wouldst abhor to commit it?

All these are strong convictions of the right grounds of thy repentance; and of the wrong, which thou dost to thine own soul, in the unjust scruples, which thou raisest against it.

SECT. 6.

Complaint of the insufficient measure of sorrow for sin, answered.

"If the grounds," thou sayest, "of my repentance be right; yet the measure is insufficient. I am sorrowful for my sins; but not enough. An effectual grief for sin should be serious, deep, hearty, intensive: mine is slight and superficial. I sigh; but my sighs come not from the bottom of an humble heart: I can sometimes weep; but I cannot pour out myself into tears: I mourn; but I do not dwell upon my sorrow."

My son, thou hast to do with a God, which, in all the dispositions of our soul, regards truth, and not quantity. If he find thy remorse sound, he stands not upon measure. He doth not mete out our repentance by inches, or by hours; but, where he finds sincerity of penitence, he is graciously indulgent.

Look upon David, and acknowledge his sin formidably heinous; no less than adultery seconded with inebriation and murder: yet, no sooner did he, in a true compunction of heart, cry *Peccavi, I have sinned against the Lord;* than he hears, from the same mouth that accused him, *The Lord also hath put away thy sin: thou shalt not die;* 2 Sam. xii. 13. You do not hear of any tearing of hair,

or rending of garments, or knockings of breast, or lying in sackcloth and ashes; but only a penitent confession availing for the expiation of so grievous crimes.

Thou art deceived, if thou thinkest God delights in the misery and afflictedness of his creature. So far only is the grief in his dear ones pleasing unto him, as it may make for the health of their souls, in the due sensibleness of their sin, in their meet capacity of mercy.

I do not, with some Casuists, flatter thee with an opinion of the sufficiency of any slight attrition, and empty wishes that thou hadst not sinned. Doubtless, a true contrition of spirit and compunction of heart are necessarily required to a saving repentance; and these, wert thou but an indifferent censurer of thine own ways, thou couldst not chuse but find within thyself: why else is thy countenance so dejected; thy cheeks pale, and watered so oft with thy tears; thy sleeps broken; thy meals stomachless? wherefore are thy so sad bemoanings, and vehement deprecations?

But, after all this, be thou such as thou accusest thyself, defective in the measure of thy repentance; dost thou rest contented in this condition? dost thou not complain of it, as thy greatest misery? art thou not heartily sorry, that thou canst be no more sorry for thy sin? Comfort thyself, my son: even this, this alone is an acceptable degree of repentance. Our God, whose will is his deed, accounts ours so. What is repentance, but a change of mind from evil to good? And, how sensible is this change! that thou, who formerly delightedst in thy sin, now abhorrest it, and thyself for it; and art yet ambitious of more grief, for being transported into it!

Let not the enemy of thy soul, who desires nothing more than to make thee perfectly miserable, win so much of thee, as to render thee unsatisfied with the measure of that penitence, which is accepted of thy God: rather, turn thine eyes from thy sins; and look up to heaven; and fasten them there, upon thine all-sufficient Mediator, at the right-hand of Majesty; and see his face smiling upon thine humbled soul, and perfectly reconciling thee to his Eternal Father; as being fully assured, that, *being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God;* Rom v. 1, 2.

SECT. 7.

Complaint of the want of faith, satisfied.

"YEA, there, there," thou sayest, "is the very core of all my complaint. I want that faith, that should give me an interest in my Saviour; and afford true comfort to my soul, and *boldness and access with confidence* to the Throne of Grace; Eph. iii. 12. I can

sorrow; but I cannot believe. My grief is not so great, as my infidelity. I see others full of *joy and peace in believing*; Rom. xv. 3: but my earthen heart cannot raise itself up to a comfortable apprehension of my Saviour: so as, methinks, I dwell in a kind of disconsolate darkness, and a sad lumpishness of unbelief; wanting that lightsome assurance, which others profess to find in themselves."

Take heed, my son, lest, while thou art too querulous, thou prove unthankful; and lest, whilst thine humbleness disparages thyself, thou make God a loser. Many a man may have a rich mine lying deep in his ground, which he knows not of. There are shells, that are inwardly furnished with pearls of great price, and are not sensible of their worth. This is thy condition: thou hast that grace, which thou complainest to want. It is no measuring of thyself by sense, especially in the time of temptation. Thou couldst not so feelingly bemoan the want of faith, if thou hadst it not.

Deny it, if thou canst:—thou assentest to the truth of all the gracious promises of God: thou acknowledgest he could not be himself, if he were not a true God; yea, truth itself: thou canst not doubt, but that he hath made sweet promises of free grace and mercy to all penitent sinners: thou canst not but grant, that thou art sinful enough to need mercy, and sorrowful enough to desire and receive mercy: canst thou but love thyself so well, as that, when thou seest a pardon reached forth to thee to save thy soul from death, thou shouldst do any other than stretch forth thy hand to take it? Lo, this hand stretched forth is thy Faith, which so takes spiritual hold of thy Saviour, that it calls not thy sense to witness.

As for that Assurance thou speakest of, they are happy, that can truly feel and maintain it; and it must be our holy ambition, what we may, to aspire unto it: but that is such a height of perfection, as every traveller in this wretched pilgrimage cannot, while he is in this perplexed and heavy way, hope to attain unto.

It is an unsafe and perilous path, which those men have walked in, who have been wont to define all faith by assurance. Should I lead thee that way, it might cost thee a fall. So sure a certainty of our constant and reflected apprehension of eternal life, is both hard to get, and not easy to hold unmoveably; considering the many and strong temptations, that we are subject unto, in this vale of misery and death. Should faith be reduced unto this trial, it would be yet more rare than our Saviour hath foretold it: for, as many a one boasts of such an assurance, who is yet failing of a true faith, hugging a vain presumption instead of it; so many a one also hath true faith, in the Lord Jesus, who yet complains to want this assurance.

Canst thou, in a sense of thine own misery, close with thy Saviour? canst thou throw thyself into the arms of his mercy? canst thou trust him with thy soul; and repose thyself upon him for forgiveness and salvation? canst thou lay thyself before him, as a miserable object of his grace and mercy? and, when it is held forth

to thee, canst thou lay some, though weak, hold upon it? Labour, what thou mayest, for further degrees of strength daily: set not up thy rest in this pitch of grace: but cheer up thyself, my son; even thus much faith shall save thy soul. Thou believest; and he hath said it, that is Truth itself; *He, that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life*; John iii. 36.

SECT. 8.

Complaint of the weakness of faith, satisfied.

"I KNOW," thou sayest, "that *Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners*: and that *whosoever believeth in him shall not perish, but have eternal life*; John iii. 15: neither can I deny, but that, in a sense of my own sinful condition, I do cast myself, in some measure, upon my Saviour, and lay some hold upon his all-sufficient redemption: but, alas, my apprehensions of him are so feeble, as that they can afford no sound comfort to my soul."

Courage, my son: were it that thou lookedst to be justified and saved by the power of the very act of thy faith, thou hadst reason to be disheartened with the conscience of the weakness thereof; but, now that the virtue and efficacy of this happy work is in the object apprehended by thee, which is the infinite merits and mercy of thy God and Saviour, which cannot be abated by thine infirmities; thou hast cause to take heart to thyself, and cheerfully to expect his salvation.

Understand thy case aright. Here is a double hand, that helps us up towards heaven: our hand of faith lays hold upon our Saviour; our Saviour's hand of mercy and plenteous redemption lays hold on us: our hold of him is feeble and easily loosed; his hold of us is strong and irresistible. Comfort thyself, therefore, in this, with the blessed Apostle: when thou art weak, then thou art strong; when weak in thyself, strong in thy Redeemer. Shouldst thou boast of thy strength, and say, *Tush, I shall never be moved*; I should suspect the truth and safety of thy condition: now thou bewailest thy weakness, I cannot but encourage and congratulate the happy estate of thy soul. If work were stood upon, a strength of hand were necessary; but, now that only taking and receiving of a precious gift is required, why may not a weak hand do that as well as a strong? as well, though not as forcibly. Be not, therefore, dejected with the want of thine own power; but comfort thyself in the rich mercies of thy Blessed Redeemer.

SECT. 9.

Complaint of inconstancy and desertion, answered.

NOW thou sayest, "Sometimes, I confess, I find my heart at ease, in a comfortable reliance on my Saviour; and, being well resolved

of the safety of my estate, promise good days to myself; and after the banishment of my former fears, dare bid defiance to temptations: but, alas, how soon is this fair weather over! how suddenly is this clear sky over-clouded, and spread over with a sad darkness, and I return to my former heartlessness!"

Didst thou conceive, my son, that grace would put thee into a constant and perpetual invariable condition of soul, while thou art in this earthly warfare? Didst thou ever hear or read of any of God's prime Saints upon earth, that were unchangeable in their holy dispositions, while they continued in this region of mutability?

Look upon the man after God's own heart. Thou shalt find him, sometimes, so courageous, as if the spirits of all his Worthies were met in his one bosom: how resolutely doth he blow off all dangers, trample on all enemies, triumph over all cross events! another while, thou shalt find him so dejected, as if he were not the man. One while, *The Lord is my shepherd; I shall lack nothing;* Ps. xxiii. 1: another while, *Why art thou then so sad, my soul; and why art thou so disquieted within me?* xlii. 14. One while, *I will not be afraid for ten thousands of the people, that have set themselves against me round about;* iii. 6. another while, *Hide me under the shadow of thy wings, from the wicked, that oppress me, from my deadly enemies, who compass me about;* xvii. 8, 9. One while, *Thy loving-kindness is before mine eyes, and I have walked in thy truth;* xxvi. 3: another while, *Lord, where are thy loving-kindnesses?* lxxxix. 49. Yea, dost thou not hear him, with one breath, professing his confidence, and lamenting his desertion? *Lord, by thy favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong: Thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled:* Ps. xxx. 7.

Look upon the Chosen Vessel, the great Apostle of the Gentiles. One while, thou shalt see him erecting trophies in himself, of victory to his God; *In all these things, we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us;* Rom. viii. 37: another while, thou shalt find him bewailing his own sinful condition; *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* Rom. vii. 24. One while, thou shalt find him caught up into the third heaven; and there, in the paradise of God: another while, thou shalt find him buffeted by the messenger of Satan; and sadly complaining to God, of the violence of that assault.

Hear the Spouse of Christ, whether the Church in common or the faithful soul, bemoaning herself; *I opened to my Beloved; but my Beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone: my soul failed when he spake. I sought him; but I could not find him: I called him; but he gave me no answer;* Cant. v. 6.

Thus it will be with thee, my son, while thou art in this frail flesh. The temper of thy soul will be, like her partner, subject to vicissitudes. Shouldst thou continue always in the same state, I should more than suspect thee. This is the difference betwixt nature and grace: that nature is still uniform, and like itself; grace varies, according to the pleasure of the giver: The Spirit breathes

when and where it listeth; John iii. 8. When therefore the gracious spirations of the Holy Ghost are within thee, be thankful to the infinite munificence of that Blessed Spirit; and still pray, *Arise, O north, and come, thou south wind, blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out;* Cant. iv. 16. But, when thou shalt find thy soul becalmed, and not a leaf stirring in this garden of thine, be not too much dejected with an ungrounded opinion of being destitute of thy God. Neither do thou repine at the seasons or measures of his bounty: that most Free and Infinitely-Beneficent Agent will not be tied to our terms; but will give what, and how, and when he pleaseth. Only do thou humbly wait upon his goodness, and be *confident, that he, who hath begun his good work in thee, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ;* Phil. i. 6.

SECT. 10.

Complaint of unregeneration and deadness in sin, satisfied.

"It is true," thou sayest, "if God had begun his good work in me, he would, at the last, for his own glory's sake, make it up: but, for me, I am a man dead in sins and trespasses; neither ever had I any true life of grace in me: some shew, indeed, I have made of a Christian profession; but I have only beguiled the eyes of the world with a mere pretence, and have not found in myself the truth and solidity of those heavenly virtues whereof I have made a formal ostentation."

It were pity, my son, thou shouldst be so bad as thou makest thyself. I have no comfort in store for hypocrisy: no disposition can be more odious to the God of Truth; insomuch as, when he would express his utmost vengeance against sinners, he hath no more fearful terms to set it forth, than *I will appoint him his portion with the hypocrites;* Matt. xxiv. 51. Were it thus with thee, it were more than high time for thee to resolve thyself into dust and ashes; and to put thyself into the hands of thine Almighty Creator, to be moulded anew by his powerful Spirit; and never to give thyself peace, till thou findest thyself *renewed in the spirit of* thy *mind;* Eph. iv. 23.

But, in the mean while, take heed lest thou be found guilty of mis-judging thy own soul, and mis-prising the work of God's Spirit in thee. God hath been better to thee, than thou wilt be known of: thou hast true life of grace in thee; and, for the time, perceivest it not. It is no heed to take of the doom thou passest upon thyself, in the hour of temptation. When thy heart was free, thou wert in another mind; and shalt, upon better advice, return to thy former thoughts. It is with thee, as it was with Eutychus, that fell down from the third loft, and was taken up for dead; yet, for all that, his life was in him. We have known those, who have lain long in trances, without any perception of life: yea, some, as that subtle Johannes Duns Scotus, have been put into their graves, for

fully dead; when as yet their soul hath been in them, though unable to exert those faculties which might evince her hidden presence. Such thou mayest be, at the worst: yea, wert thou but in charity with thyself, thou wouldst be found in a much better condition.

There is the same reason of the natural life and the spiritual. Life, where it is, is discerned by Breathing, Sense, Motion.

Where there is the Breath of life, there must be a life that sends it forth. If, then, the soul breathes forth holy desires, doubtless there is a life whence they proceed. Now deny, if thou canst, that thou hast these spiritual breathings of holy desires within thee. Dost thou not many a time sigh, for thine own insensateness? is not thy heart troubled with the thoughts of thy want of grace? dost thou not truly desire, that God would *renew a right spirit within* thee? Take comfort to thyself: this is the work of the inward principle of God's Spirit within thee. As well may a man breathe without life, as thou couldst be thus affected without grace.

Sense is a quick descrier of life: pinch or wound a dead man, he feels nothing; but the living perceiveth the easiest touch. When thou hast heard the fearful judgments of God denounced against sinners, and laid home to the conscience, hast thou not found thy heart pierced with them? hast thou not shrunk inward; and secretly thought, "How shall I decline this dreadful damnation?" When thou hast heard the sweet mercies of God laid forth to penitent sinners, hath not thy heart silently said, "Oh, that I had my share in them!" When thou hast heard the name of Christ blasphemed, hast thou not felt a secret horror in thy bosom? All these argue a true spiritual life within thee.

Motion is the most perfect discoverer of life. He, that can stir his limbs, is surely not dead. The feet of the soul are the affections. Hast thou not found in thyself a hate and detestation of that sin, whereinto thou hast been miscarried? hast thou not found in thyself a true grief of heart, for thy wretched indisposition to all good things? hast thou not found a secret love to and complacency in those, whom thou hast thought truly godly and conscionable? Without a true life of grace, these things could never have been. Are not thine eyes and hands many times lifted up, in an imploration of mercy? Canst thou deny, that thou hast a true, though but weak, appetite to the means, and further degrees of grace? What can this be, but that *hunger and thirst after righteousness*, to which our Saviour hath pronounced blessedness?

Discomfort not thyself too much, my son, with the present disappearance of grace, during the hour of thy temptation. It is no otherwise with thee, than with a tree in winter season, whose sap is run down to the root; wherein there is no more shew of the life of vegetation by any buds or blossoms that it might put forth, than if it were stark dead: yet, when the sun returns, and sends forth his comfortable beams in the spring, it burgens out afresh; and bewrays that vital juice, which lay long hidden in the earth. No otherwise,

than with the hearth of some good housewife, which is, towards night, swept up; and hideth the fire, under the heap of her ashes: a stranger would think it were quite out: here is no appearance of light, or heat, or smoke; but, by that time she hath stirred it up a little, the bright gleeds shew themselves, and are soon raised to a flame. Stay but till the spring, when the Sun of Righteousness shall call up thy moisture into thy branches; stay but till the morning, when the fire of grace which was raked up in the ashes shall be drawn forth and quickened; and thou shalt find cause to say of thy heart, as Jacob said of his hard lodging, *Surely, the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not*; Gen. xxviii. 16. Only do thou, not neglecting the means, wait patiently upon God's leisure: stay quietly upon the bank of this Bethesda, till the angel descend and move the water.

SECT. 11.

Complaint of the insensibleness of the time and means of conversion answered.

"I COULD gladly," thou sayest, "attend with patience upon God, in this great and happy work of the excitation of grace, were I but sure I had it: could I be but persuaded of the truth of my conversion. But it is my great misery, that here I am at a sad and uncomfortable loss. For I have been taught, that every true convert can design the time, the place, the means, the manner of his conversion: and can shew, how near he was brought to the gates of death, how close to the very verge of hell, when God, by a mighty and out-stretched arm, snatched him away, in his own sensible apprehension, from the pit; and suddenly rescued him from that damnation; and put him into a new state of spiritual life, and undefeasible salvation. All which I cannot do: not finding in myself any such sudden and vehement concussion and heart-breaking; any such forcible and irresistible operation of God's Spirit within me: not being able to design the sermon, that converted me; or those particular approaches, that my soul made towards a hardly-recovered desperation."

My son, it is not safe for any man, to take upon him to set limits to the ways of the Almighty; or to prescribe certain rules to the proceedings of that Infinite Wisdom. That most Free and All-wise Agent will not be tied to walk always in one path; but varies his courses, according to the pleasure of his own will.

One man, he calls suddenly; another, by leisure: one, by a kind of holy violence, as he did St. Paul; another, by sweet solicitations, as Philip, Nathanael, Andrew, Peter, Matthew, and the rest of the Apostles: one man, he draws to heaven with gracious invitations; another, he drives thither by a strong hand.

We have known those, who, having mispent their younger times in notoriously lewd and debauched courses, living as without God,

yea, against him, have been suddenly heart-stricken with some powerful denunciation of judgment, which hath so wrought upon them, that it hath brought them within sight of hell; who, after long and deep humiliation, have been raised up, through God's mercy, to a comfortable sense of the divine favour; and have proceeded to a very high degree of regeneration, and lived and died Saints. But this is not every man's case.

Those, who, having from their infancy been brought up *in the nurture and fear of the Lord*, Eph. vi. 4. and from their youth have been trained up under a godly and conscionable ministry; where they have been continually plied with the effectual means of grace; *Precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little and there a little;* Isa. xxviii. 10. and have, by an insensible conveyance, received the gracious inoperations of the Spirit of God, (though not without many inward strifes with temptations and sad fits of humiliation for their particular failings) framing them to a holy obedience: these cannot expect to find so sensible alterations in themselves. As well may the child know when he was naturally born, as these may know the instant of their spiritual regeneration; and as well may they see the grass to grow, as they can perceive their insensible increase of grace. It is enough, that the child, attaining to the use of reason, now knows that he was born; and that when we see the grass higher than we left it, we know that it is grown.

Let it then suffice thee, my son to know that the thing is done, though thou canst not define the time and manner of doing it. Be not curious in matter of particular perceptions, while thou mayest be assured of the reality and truth of the grace wrought in thee. Thou seest the skilful chirurgeon, when he will make a fontinell in the body of his patient, he can do it either by a sudden incision or by a leisurely corrosive: both sort to one end, and equally tend towards health. Trust God with thyself; and let him alone, with his own work: what is it to thee, which way he thinks best to bring about thy salvation?

SECT. 12.

Complaint of irresolution and uncertainty, in matter of our election, answered.

"ALL were safe," thou sayest, "if only I could be ascertained of mine election to life: I could be patient, so I might be sure: but, wretched man that I am, here, here I stick! I see others walk confidently and comfortably, as if they were in heaven already: whereas, I droop under a continual diffidence; raising unto myself daily new arguments of my distrust: could my heart be settled in this assurance, nothing could ever make me other than happy."

It is true, my son, that, as all other mercies flow from this of our

election; so, the securing of this one involves all other favours, that concern the well being of our souls.

It is no less true, that our election may be assured: else the Holy Ghost had never laid so deep a charge upon us, to do our utmost endeavour to ascertain it: and we shall be much wanting to ourselves, if, hearing so excellent a blessing may be attained by our diligence, we shall slacken our hand; and not stretch it forth to the height, to reach that crown, which is held out to us.

But, withal, it is true, that if there were not difficulty more than ordinary in this work, the Apostle had not so earnestly called for the utmost of our endeavour to effect it *.

Shortly, the truth is, in all Christianity there is no path, wherein there is more need of treading warily, than in this: on each side, is danger, and death. Security lies on the one hand; presumption, on the other: the miscarriage, either way, is deadly.

Look about thee, and see the miserable examples of both kinds. Some walk carelessly, as if there were no heaven; or, if there were such a place, yet as if it nothing concerned them: their hearts are taken up with earth; neither care nor wish to be other, than this world can make them: *The God of this world hath blinded their minds that believe not;* 2 Cor. iv. 4. Some others walk proudly; being vainly puft up with their own ungrounded imaginations; as if they were already invested with their glory; as if, being rapt up with the Chosen Vessel into the third heaven, they had there seen their names recorded in the Book of Life: whereas, this is nothing but an illusion of that Lying Spirit, who knows the way to keep them for ever out of heaven, is to make them believe they are there.

It must be thy main care, to walk even, in a just equidistance from both these extremes; and so to compose thyself, that thou mayest be resolute without presumption, and careful without diffidence.

And first, I advise thee to abandon those false teachers, whose trade is to improve their wits for the discomfort of souls, in broaching the sad doctrines of uncertainty and distrust. Be sure, our Saviour had never bidden his disciples to rejoice that their *names are written in heaven;* (Luke x. 20.) if there had not been a particular enrolment of them; or if that record had been alterable; or if the same disciples could never have attained to the notice of such inscription.

Neither is this a mercy peculiar to his domestic followers alone; but universal to all, that shall believe through their word. Even thou and I are spoken to, in them. So sure as we have names, we may know them registered in those eternal records above.

Not that we should take an Acesius's ladder, and climb up into heaven, and turn over the book of God's secret counsels, and read ourselves designed to glory: but, that, as we by experience see

* 2 Pet. i. 10. Σπουδάσατε.

that we can by reflections see and read those letters, which directly we cannot; so we may do here, in this highest of spiritual objects. The same Apostle, that give us our charge, gives us, withal, our direction: *Wherefore*, saith he, *brethren, give all diligence to make your calling and election sure*: διὰ τῶν καλῶν ἔργων, as divers copies read it; *by good works. For, if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered to you abundantly, into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ*; 2 Pet. i. 10, 11.

Lo, first, our *calling*; then, our *election*. Not that we should begin with heaven, and thence descend to the earth: it is enough for the angels on that celestial ladder of Jacob, to both descend and ascend: but that we should from earth ascend to heaven; from our *calling*, to our *election*; as knowing, that God shews what he hath done for us above, by that which he hath wrought in us here below.

Our *Calling*, therefore, first: not outward and formal; but inward and effectual. The Spirit of God hath a voice, and our soul hath an ear. That voice of the Spirit speaks inwardly and effectually to the ear of the soul, calling us out of the state of corrupt nature, into the state of grace; out of darkness, into his marvellous light.

By thy calling, therefore, mayest thou judge of thine *Election*. God never works in vain: neither doth he ever cast away his saving graces; whatever become of the common. But, *whom he did predestinate, them also he called; and whom he called, them he justified; and whom he justified, them also he glorified*; Rom. viii. 30.

"This, doubtless," thou sayest, "is sure in itself; but how is it assured to me?" Resp. That, which the Apostle adds, as it is read in some copies, *By good works*, if therein we also comprehend the acts of believing and repenting, is a notable evidence of our election. But, not to urge that clause, which, though read in the Vulgate, is found wanting in our editions; the clear words of the text evince no less: *For, if ye do these things, ye shall never fall.* Here is our negative certainty. And, for our positive: *So an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly, into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.* Lo, if we shall never fall, if we shall undoubtedly enter into the kingdom of Christ, what possible scruple can be made of the blessed accomplishment of our election?

What then are these things, which must be done by us? Cast your eyes upon that precious chain of graces, which you shall find stringed up in the foregoing words. If you *add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity*, 2 Pet. i. 5, 6, 7. If you would know what God hath written concerning you in heaven, look into your own bosom: see what graces he

hath there wrought in you. Truth of grace, saith the divine Apostle, will make good the certainty of your election.

Not to instance in the rest of that heavenly combination, do but single out the first and the last, *faith* and *charity*.

For *Faith*, how clear is that of our Saviour, *He, that believeth in him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but hath passed from death to life!* John v. 24. Lo, what access can danger have into heaven? All the peril is in the way: now the believer is already passed into life. This is the grace, by which *Christ dwells in our hearts;* Eph. iii. 17. and whereby we have communion with Christ, and an assured testimony of and from him: for, *He, that believeth in the Son of God, hath the witness in himself;* 1 John v. 10. And what witness is that? *This is the record, that God hath given us eternal life; and this life is in his Son. He, that hath the Son, hath life;* vv. 11, 12. O happy and sure connection! Eternal life, first: this life eternal is in and by Christ Jesus: this Jesus is ours by faith: this faith witnesseth to our souls our assurance of life eternal.

Charity is the last: which comprehends our love both to God and man: for, from the reflection of God's love to us, there ariseth a love from us to God again. The beloved disciple can say, *We love him, because he loved us first;* 1 John iv. 19. and from both these resulteth our love to our brethren. Behold, so full an evidence, that the Apostle tells us, expressly, that *we know we are passed from death to life, because we love the brethren;* 1 John iii. 14. For the love of the Father is inseparable from the love of the Son: *He, that loveth him that begets, loves him that is begotten of him;* 1 John v. 1.

Now then, my son, deal unpartially with thine own heart. Ask of it seriously, as in the presence of the Searcher of all Hearts, whether thou dost not find in thyself these unfailing evidences of thine election. Art thou not effectually, though not perfectly, called out of the world and corrupt nature? Dost thou not inwardly abhor thy former sinful ways? Dost thou not think of what thou wert with detestation? Dost thou not heartily desire and endeavour to be in all things approved to God, and conformed to thy Saviour? Dost thou not gladly cast thyself upon the Lord Jesus, and depend upon his free all-sufficiency for pardon and salvation? Dost thou not love that Infinite Goodness, who hath been so rich in mercies to thee? Dost thou not love and bless those gleams of goodness, which he hath cast upon his Saints on earth? In plain terms, dost thou not love a good man, because he is good? Comfort thyself in the Lord, my son: let no fainting qualms of fear and distrust possess thy soul: *Faithful is he, that hath called thee,* who will also *preserve thy whole spirit, and soul, and body blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ;* 1 Thess. v. 24, 23.

CHAP. III.

COMFORTS AGAINST TEMPTATIONS.

SECT. 1.

Christ himself assaulted.—Our trial is for our good.

THOU art haunted with Temptations: that, which the enemy sees he cannot do by force or fraud, he seeks to effect by importunity:—

Can this seem strange to thee, when thou seest the Son of God in the wilderness, forty days and forty nights, under the hand of the Tempter? He, that durst thus set upon the *Captain of our Salvation*, (Heb. ii. 10.) *God blessed for ever*, how shall he spare frail flesh and blood? Why should that Saviour of thine, thinkest thou, suffer himself to be tempted, if not to bear thee out in all thy temptations? The keys of the bottomless pit are in his hands: he could have shut up that Presumptuous Spirit under chains of darkness, so as he could have come no nearer to him than hell; but he would let him loose, and permit him to do his worst, purposely, that we might not think much to be tempted, and that he might foil that great enemy for us.

Canst thou think, that he, who now sits at the right-hand of majesty, commanding all the powers of heaven, earth, hell, could not easily keep off that Malignant Spirit from assailing thee? Canst thou think him less merciful, than mighty? Would he die to save thee? and will he turn that ban-dog of hell loose upon thee to worry thee?

Dost thou not pray daily to thy Father in Heaven, that he would not lead thee into temptation? If thou knowest thou hast to do with a God that heareth prayers, O thou of little faith, why fearest thou? Lo, he, that was led by his own Divine Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of that Evil Spirit, bids thee pray to the Father, that he would not lead thee into temptation; as implying, that thou couldst not go into temptation, unless he lead thee; and, while he that is thy Father leads thee, how canst thou miscarry?

Let no man, when he is tempted, say, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil; neither tempteth he any man; James i. 13. God tempteth thee not, my son: yet know, that, being his, thou couldst not be tempted without him; both permitting and ordering that temptation, to his own glory, and thy good. That grace, which thy God hath given thee, he will have thus exercised, thus manifested. So we have known some indulgent father, who, being assured of the skill and valour of his dear son, puts

him upon tiltings, and barriers, and public duels; and looks on with contentment, as well knowing, that he will come off with honour. How had we known the admirable continency of good Joseph, if he had not been strongly solicited by a wanton mistress? How had we known David's valour, if the Philistines had not had a giantly challenger to encounter him? How had we known the invincible piety of the three children, if there had not been a furnace to try them? or, of Daniel, if there had been no lions to accompany him? Be confident thy glory shall be according to the proportion of thy trial: neither couldst thou ever be so happy, if thou hadst not been beholding to temptations.

SECT. 2.

The powerful assistance of God's Spirit; and the example of St. Paul.

"How often," thou sayest "have I beaten off these wicked suggestions: yet still, they turn upon me again, as if denials invited them; as if they meant to tire me, with their continual solicitations; as if I must yield and be over-laid, though not with their force, yet with their frequence?"

Know, my son, that thou hast to do with *spiritual wickednesses*; Eph. vi. 12: whose nature is therefore as unwearіable, as their malice unsatisfiable. Thou hast a spirit of thine own; and, besides, God hath given thee of his: so he looks thou shouldst, through the power of his gracious assistance, match the importunity of that Evil Spirit, with an indefatigable resistance: *Be strong, therefore, in the Lord, and in the power of his might; and put on the whole armour of God, that thou mayest be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand;* Eph. vi. 10, 11, 13.

Look upon a stronger champion than thyself, the blessed Apostle: thou shalt find him in thine own condition: see *the messenger of Satan* sent *to buffet him;* 2 Cor. xii. 7: and he did it to purpose: how soundly was that Chosen Vessel buffeted on both sides, and how often! Thrice, he besought the Lord that it might depart from him; but, even yet, it would not be: the temptation holds; only a comfort shall countervail it; *My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness;* v. 9.

It is not so much to be considered, how hard thou art laid at, as how strongly thou art upheld. How many, with the blessed martyr Theodorus, have, upon racks and gibbets, found their consolations stronger than their pains! While, therefore, the goodness of thy God sustains and supplies thee with abundance of spiritual vigour and refreshment answerable to the worst of thine assaults, what cause hast thou to complain of suffering?

The advice is high and heroical, which the Apostle James gives to his compatriots: *My brethren, count it all joy, when ye fall into*

divers temptations; James i. 2. Let those temptations be rather trials by afflictions, than suggestions of sin: yet, even those, overcome, yield no small cause of triumph; for, by them, is our faith no less tried, and the trying of our faith worketh patience, and the perfect work of patience is a blessed entireness of grace. The number of enemies adds to the praise of the victory, to overcome single temptations, is commendable; but, to subdue troops of temptations, is glorious.

SECT. 3.

The restraint of our spiritual enemies; and their overmatching by the power of God.

"ALAS," thou sayest, "I am overlaid, not with multitudes only, but with power. In all challenges of duels, there is wont to be respect had to the equality, both of the combatants and weapons: but, woe is me, how am I overmatched! For me, I am a weak wretch: and *we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers; against the rulers of the darkness of this world; against spiritual wickedness in heavenly places*; Eph. vi. 12. Behold *the Amorite, whose height is like the height of the cedars, and their strength as the strength of oaks*; Amos ii. 9. What are we, but poor pismires, in the valley, to these men of measures? *Who can stand before* these *sons of Anak?*"

I did not advise thee, my son, to be strong in thyself: alas, we are all made up of weakness! one of those powers of darkness were able to subdue a whole world of men: but, to be *strong in the Lord*, whose lowest angel is able to vanquish a whole hell of devils; *and, in the power of his might*, who commandeth the most furious of those infernal spirits to their chains. Woe were to us, if we were left to our own hands: there were no way with us, but foiling and death. But, *our help is in the name of the Lord, who hath made heaven and earth*; Ps. cxxiv. 8. *The Lord is our strength and our shield*; xxviii. 7. *He is our rock and our salvation: he is our defence; so as we shall not be moved*; lxii. 2, 6. *It is he, that hath girded us with strength unto battle; and that subdueth those, that rise up against us*; xviii. 39.

Take courage, therefore, to thyself, man: there cannot be so much difference betwixt thee and those hellish powers, as there is betwixt them and the Almighty: their force is finite; and limited by his omnipotence. How fain dost thou think Jannes and Jambres, the great magicians of Egypt, by the conjoined powers of hell, would have made but a louse, in an affront to Moses! yet they could not. How earnestly was that legion of devils fain to beg but for leave to prevail over a few Gaderene-swine! How strong therefore soever they seem to thee; yet, to him, they are so mere weakness, that they cannot so much as move without him. Who can fear a bear or a lion, when he sees them chained to their stake?

Even children can behold them baited, when they see their restraint.

Look not upon thyself, therefore: look not upon them: but look up to that over-ruling hand of the Almighty, who ordinates all their motions to his own holy purposes; and, even out of their malice, raises glory to himself, and advantage to his servant.

SECT. 4.

The advantage that is made to us by our temptations and foils.

"IT is a woeful advantage," thou sayest, "that I have made of temptations: for, alas, I have been shamefully foiled by them: and, what by their subtlety, and what by their violence, have been miscarried into a grievous sin against my God; and lie down in a just confusion of face, to have been so miserably vanquished."

Hadst thou wanted tears, my son, for thine offence, I should willingly have lent thee some. It is indeed a heavy case, that thou hast given thy deadly enemy this cause to triumph over thee, and hast thus provoked thy God. Be thou thoroughly humbled under the conscience of thy sin; and be not too sudden, in snatching a pardon out of the hand, which thou hast offended: be humbled; but, after thou hast made thy peace with God by a serious repentance, be not disheartened with thy failings.

Neither do I fear to tell thee of an advantage to be made, not of thy temptations only, but even of thy sin. What art thou other than a gainer, if, having been beaten down to thy knees, thou hast, in a holy indignation, risen up and fought so much the more valiantly? A wound received doth but whet the edge of true fortitude: many a one had never been victorious, if he had not seen himself bleed first. Look where thou wilt, upon all the Saints of God: mark, if thou canst see any one of them without his scars. Oh, the fearful gashes, that we have seen in the noblest of God's champions upon earth; whose courage had never been raised so high, if it had not been out of the sense of some former discomfitures! As some well spirited wrestler therefore, be not so much troubled with thy fall, as zealous to repay it with a more successful grappling.

We know, saith the blessed Apostle, *that all things work together for good, to them that love God;* Rom. viii. 28. *all things*, yea, even those that are worse than nothing, their very sins. The Corinthians offended in their silent connivance at the incestuous person: the Apostle's reproof produceth their sorrow: what was the issue? *For, behold, this self-same thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you; yea, what clearing of yourselves; yea, what indignation; yea, what fear; yea, what vehement desire; yea, what zeal; yea, what revenge!* 2 Cor. vii. 11. Lo, what a marvellous advantage is here made of one offence! What hath

Satan now gotten by this match? One poor Corinthian is misled to an incestuous copulation: the Evil Spirit rejoiceth to have got such a prey: but how long shall he enjoy it? Soon after, the offending soul, upon the Apostle's holy censure, is reclaimed: he is delivered over to Satan, that Satan should never possess him. The Corinthians are raised to a greater height of godly zeal than ever. Corinth had never been so rich in grace, if it had not been defiled with so foul a crime.

Say now, whether this be not, in effect, thy case. Shouldst thou ever have so much hated thy sin, if thou hadst not been drawn in to commit it? Shouldst thou have found in thyself so fervent love to thy God, if it had not been out of the sense of his great mercy in remitting it? Wouldst thou have been so wary of thy steps as now thou art, if thou hadst never slipped? Give glory to God, my son, while thou givest shame to thyself; and bless him, for the benefit that he hath been pleased to make of thine offending him.

SECT. 5.

Complaint of relapses into sin, with the remedy thereof.

"BUT, alas," thou sayest, "my case is far worse, than it is conceived: I have been more than once miscarried into the same sin. Even after I have made profession of my repentance, I have been transported into my former wickedness. Having washed off my sin, as I thought, with my many tears; yet I have suffered my soul to be defiled with it again."

I may not flatter thee, my son. This condition is dangerous. Those diseases, which, upon their first seizure, have, without any great peril of the patient, received cure, after a recidivation have threatened death.

Look upon the Saints of God: thou shalt find they have kept aloof from that fire, wherewith they have been formerly burnt: thou shalt not find Noah again uncovered, through drunkenness, in his tent; thou shalt not find Judah climbing up again to Tamar's bed: thou shalt not take Peter again in the high-priest's hall, denying his Master; or, after Paul's reproof, halting in his dissimulation; Gal. ii. 11, 12, 13.

But tell me, notwithstanding; art thou truly serious with thy God? Hast thou doubled thine humiliation, for the reduplication of thine offence? Hast thou sought God so much the more instantly, with an unfeigned contrition of heart? Hast thou found thy soul wrought to so much greater detestation of thy sin, as thine acquaintance with it hath been more? Hast thou taken this occasion to lay better hold on thy Saviour, and to re-inforce the vows of thy more careful and strict obedience? Be of good cheer: this unpurposed reiteration of thy sin shall be no prejudice to thy salvation.

It is one thing, for a man to walk on willingly in a beaten path

of sin; another thing, for a man to be justled out of the way of righteousness by the violence of a temptation, which he soon recovers again by a sound repentance. The best cannot but be overtaken with sin: but, *he, that is born of God, doth not commit sin;* 1 John iii. 9. He may be transported whither he meant not; but he makes not a trade of doing ill: his heart is against that, which his hand is drawn unto: and if, in this inward strife, he be overpowered, he lies not down in a willing yieldance, but struggles up again; and, in a resumed courage and indignation, tramples on that, which formerly supplanted him.

Didst thou give thyself over to a resolved course of sinning, and, betwixt whiles, shouldst knock thy breast with a formal *God forgive me*, I should have no comfort in store for thee; but send thee rather to the whipping-stock of the Almighty for due correction, if possibly those seasonable stripes may prevent thine everlasting torments: but now, since *what thou hatest, that thou dost; and thou dost that, which thou wouldest not; and it is no more thou that dost it, but sin that dwells in thee;* Rom. vii. 15, 16, 17: cry out as much as thou wilt on *the sinfulness of* thy *sin;* v. 13: bewail thy weakness, with a better man than thyself; *Oh, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death!* v. 24: but know, that thou hast found mercy with thy God; thy repeated sin may grieve, but cannot hurt thy soul.

Had we to do with a finite compassion, it might be abated by spending itself upon a frequent remission; like as some great river may be drawn dry by many small outlets: but, now that we deal with a God whose mercy is as himself, infinite, it is not the greatness or the number of our offences that can make a difference in his free remissions. That God, who hath charged our weak charity, *not to be overcome with evil, but to overcome evil with good;* Rom. xii. 21: justly scorneth, that we should think his infinite and incomprehensible goodness can be checked with our evil.

It was not without a singular providence, that Peter came to our Saviour with that question in his mouth, *Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?* Matt. xviii. 21: that it might fetch from that Blessed Son of God that gracious answer, for our perpetual direction and comfort; *I say not unto thee, until seven times, but until seventy times seven;* Matt. xviii. 22. Lord, if thou wouldst have us sinful men thus indulgent to one another, in the case of our mutual offences; what limits can be set to thy mercies, in our sins against thee? Be we penitent, thou canst not but be gracious.

CHAP. IV.

COMFORTS AGAINST WEAKNESS OF GRACE.

SECT. 1.

The common condition of all Saints.

THOU complainest of the weakness of grace: some little stirrings thou feelest of God's Spirit within thee; but so feeble, that thou canst not find any solid comfort in them: thou seest others, thou sayest, whose *breasts are full of milk, and their bones moistened with marrow;* Job xxi. 24. while thou languishest under a spiritual leanness and imbecility: thou wantest that vigorous heat of holy affections, and that alacrity in the performance of holy duties, which thou observest in other Christians:—

I love this complaint of thine, my son; and tell thee, that, without this, thou couldst not be in the way of being happy.

Thinkest thou, that those, whom thou esteemest more eminent in grace, make not the same moan that thou dost? Certainly, they never had any grace, if they did not complain to have too little. Every man best feels his own wants; and is ready to pass secret censures upon himself, for that, wherein he is applauded by others.

Even the man after God's own heart can say, *But I am poor and sorrowful;* Ps. lxix. 29. He was a great king, when he said so: it was not meanness in outward estate, that troubled him; but a spiritual neediness: for he had before, in the same heavenly ditty, professed, *O God, thou knowest my foolishness, and my guiltiness is not hid from thee;* v. 5.

It was an old observation of wise Solomon; *There is, that maketh himself rich, and hath nothing: there is, that maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches;* Prov. xiii. 7. In this latter rank, are many gracious souls; and thine, I hope, for one; who certainly had never been so wealthy in grace, if they had been conceited of greater store. Even in this sense, many a Saint may say with St. Paul, *When I am weak, then I am strong:* since the very complaint of weakness argues strength; and, on the contrary, an opinion of sufficient grace is an evident conviction of mere emptiness.

SECT. 2.

The improvement of weak graces; and God's free distribution.

BUT, suppose thyself so poor as thou pretendest; it is not so much, what we have, as how we improve it. How many have we known, that have grown rich out of a little: whereas, others, out of a great

stock, have run into debt and beggary! Had that servant in the Gospel, who received but one talent, employed it to the gain of a second, he had been proportionably as well rewarded, as he that with five gained ten.

In our temporal estate, we are warned by the wisest man, to take heed of making haste to be rich; Prov. xxviii. 20: and the great Apostle tells us, that *he, that would be rich, falls into many temptations;* 1 Tim. vi. 9.

Surely, there is no small danger also, in affecting to be too suddenly rich in the endowments of the soul. This cannot but be accompanied, with the temptation of an unthankful distrust: for, on the one side, he, that believes, makes not haste; and, on the other, we cannot be sufficiently thankful for what we have, while we do over-eagerly reach after what we have not.

Tell me, thou querulous soul, dost thou not acknowledge what thou hast to be the gift of God? and wilt thou not allow the great Benefactor of Heaven to dispense his own favours as he pleaseth? If he think fit rather to fill thy vessel with drops of grace, art thou discontented because he doth not pour out his Spirit upon thee in full vials? If thou have any at all, it is more than he owes thee; more than thou canst repay him. Take what thou hast, as an earnest of more; and wait thankfully upon his bounty for the rest. Is it not meet, in a free-gift, to attend the leisure of the donor? What sturdy and ill-mannered beggars are we, if we will not stay at the door, till we be served; and grudge at our alms, when it comes! Look upon the Father of the Faithful: thou shalt find him fourscore and six years childless; and, at last, after he had got an Ishmael, he must wait fourteen years more for the promised seed; and, when he had enjoyed him not much longer than he expected him, he must then sacrifice him to the giver. Thus, thus, my son, must our faith be exercised, in attendance both for time and measure of mercy.

SECT. 3.

God's acceptation of truth, not quantity.

THY graces are weak:—Yet, if true, discomfort not thyself.

How many weak bodies have we known, which, with careful attendance, have enjoyed better and longer health, than those, that have had bigger limbs, and more brawny arms!

Neither is it otherwise in the soul. Soundness of grace is health: increased degrees of grace make up the strength of that spiritual part: if thou have but this health tenderly observed, thou mayest be happy in the enjoying of thy God, although more happy in a comfortable sense of a stronger fruition.

We have to do with a God, that stands not so much upon quantity, as truth, of grace: he knows we can have nothing, but what he gives us, and enables us to improve; and, where he sees our

wills and endeavours not wanting, he is ready to accept and crown his own gift in us. *He will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax;* Matt. xii. 20.

SECT. 4.

The variety of God's gifts, and the ages and statures of grace.

THOU art weak in grace:—Be not discouraged, my son: there are all ages, all statures, in Christ. Shall the child repine, that he is not suddenly grown a man? Shall the dwarf quarrel, that he is not a giant? Were there a standard of graces, less than which would not be accepted, thou hadst reason to be troubled: but it is so far from that, as that our Saviour hath encharged, *Suffer little children to come to me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of heaven;* Matt. xix. 14.

In some legal oblations, it pleased God to regard time and age. The lamb for the passover and for the peace-offering, the bullock for the sin-offering of Israel, have their date assigned; Lev. iii. 7. iv. 14: and, in divers cases, he hath called for two turtle doves, or two young pigeons; Lev. i. 14. v. 7. 11. xii. 8. xv. 14. Young turtles and old doves, in the mean while, according to our Jewish Doctors, were unlawful to be offered.

But, in our spiritual sacrifices, all ages are equally accepted. He, that is eternal, regards not time: he, that is infinite and almighty, regards not statures. Even the eleventh hour carried the penny, as well as the first. And, *Let the weak say, I am strong;* Joel iii. 10.

SECT. 5.

The safety of our leisurely progress in grace.

IT troubles thee, that thou hast made so slow progress in graces: thy desire is to heavenward; and thou checkest thyself for no more speed:—

It is a happy ambition, that carries thee on, in that way to blessedness. Quicken thyself, what thou mayest, with all gracious incitations in that holy course: but know, my son, that we may not always hope to go thitherward on the spur. In that passage, there are ways, that will not admit of haste. How many have we known, that, by too much forwardness, have been cast back in their journey; whether through want of breath, or mistaking their way, or misplacing their steps! I praise thee, that it is the desire of thy soul, to *run the way of God's commandments;* Ps. cxix. 32: and do encourage thy holy zeal, in speeding that holy race; ever praying thou mayest *so run, as that thou mayest obtain;* 1 Cor. ix. 24. But, withal, I must tell thee, that, *blessed is the man, that*

doth but *walk in the Law of the Lord;* Ps. cxix. 1. While thou passest on, though but a foot pace, thou art every step nearer to thy glory: so long as thou riddest way, thou art safe. *Blessed is the man, whose strength is in thee, O God; in whose heart are thy ways: who, passing through the vale of misery, goes on from strength to strength, till he appear before thee his God in Sion;* Ps. lxxxiv. 5, 6, 7.

SECT. 6.

Our good desires and endeavours.

THY grace is little, but thou wishest and labourest for more:—This is a good beginning of heavenly wealth. He is in a good way to riches, that desires to thrive.

Never any holy soul lost her longing. If thy wishes be hearty and serious, thou hast that, which thou cravest; or, at least, be sure thou shalt have. *If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth no man, and it shall be given him;* James i. 5.

Were this condition offered us for worldly riches, who would be poor? If we embrace it not in spiritual, either we distrust the promises, or neglect our own mercies.

In these temporal things, how many have so eagerly followed the chase of the world, that they have over-run it; and, while they have greedily swallowed gain, have been choked with it! But, in those better blessings, earnestness of desire, and fervour of prosecution, was never but answered with a gracious impetration.

SECT. 7.

The happiness of an humble poverty in spirit.

THOU art poor in grace; but, in an humble self-dejection, longest for more:—Know, that an humble poverty is better than a proud fulness. Wert thou poor and proud, there were no hope of thy proficiency: thy false conceit lies in the way of thy thrift; and many a one had been gracious if they had not so thought themselves: but, now that thou art meaner in thine opinion than in thine estate, who can more justly challenge our Saviour's blessing, *Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven?* Matt. v. 3.

Thou art weak in grace: It is thine own fault, if thou gettest not more strength. Wherefore serves that heavenly food of the Word and Sacraments, but to nourish thy soul to eternal life? Do but eat and digest, and thou canst not but grow stronger. God will not be wanting to thee in an increase of grace, if thou be not wanting to thyself. He offers his Spirit to thee, with the means: it is thy sinful neglect, if thou separate them. Thou knowest in

whose hands is the staff of bread: pray, that he, who gives thee the food and the mouth, would also give the appetite, digestion, nourishment.

SECT. 8.

An incitement to more caution, and faster adherence to God.

THY grace is weak:—It concerns thee, so much the more, to be cautious in avoiding occasions of temptation. He, that carries brittle glasses is chary of them, that they take not a knock; whereas, strong metal fears no danger. He, that hath but a small rush-candle, walks softly; and keeps off every air.

Thou art weak:—Thy God is strong. Dost thou not see the feeble child, that finds he cannot go alone, how fast he clings to the hand of his mother; more trusting to her help, than to his own strength? Do thou so to thy God; and say, with the blessed Psalmist, *Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not;* Ps. xvii. 5. *Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe. Uphold me, according to thy word, that I may live; and let me not be ashamed of my hope;* Ps. cxix. 117, 116. Peter was a bold man, that durst step forth and set his foot upon the liquid face of the waters: but he, that ventured to walk there upon the strength of his faith, when he felt the stiff wind and saw the great billow, began to sink in his weakness; but, no sooner had Jesus stretched forth his hand and caught him, than he takes courage, and walks now with the same confidence upon the sea that he wont to walk on the land. Together with a check, he receives more supportation from Christ, than his own legs could afford him: Matt. xiv. 29, 30, 31. Fear no miscarriage through thine own weakness, while thou art held up by that strong helper.

CHAP. V.

COMFORTS AGAINST INFAMY AND DISGRACE.

NEXT to our body and soul, is the care of our reputation; which whoso hath lost is no better than civilly dead.

SECT. 1.

Like sufferings of the holiest; yea, of Christ himself.

THOU sufferest under a public infamy:—I do not ask how justly. He was a wise man, that said, it was fit for every good man even to fear a false reproach. A good name is no less wounded, for the time, with that, than with a just crimination.

This is a sore evil, my son; and such as, against which there is no preservative, and for which there is hardly any remedy. Innocence itself is no antidote against evil tongues. Neither greatness nor sanctity can secure any man from unjust calumny.

Might that be any ease to thy heart, I could tell thee of the greatest of Kings, and holiest of Saints, that have grievously complained of this mischief; and yet were not able to help themselves: thou hast the company of the best, that ever the earth bore, if that may be any mitigation of thy misery.

Yea, what do I speak of sinful men, whose greatest purity might be blurred with some imperfections? Look upon the Lord of Life, the Eternal Son of the Ever-Living God, God clothed in flesh, and see whether any other were his lot, while he sojourned in this region of mortality. Dost thou not hear him, for his gracious sociableness, branded as a man *gluttonous, a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners?* Matt. xi. 19. Dost thou not hear him, for his powerful and merciful cure of demoniacs, blazoned for a fellow, that *casts out devils through Beelzebub, the Prince of the Devils?* Matt. xii. 24. Dost thou not hear him slandered to death, for treason against Cæsar, and blasphemy against God? John xix. 12. Matt. xxvi. 65. Dost thou not hear the multitude say, *He is mad, and hath a devil?* John x. 20. Dost thou not hear him, after this death, charged with imposture? Matt. xxvii. 63. And can there be any worse names than glutton, drunkard, conjurer, traitor, blasphemer, madman, demoniac, impostor?

Who now can henceforth think much to be slandered with meaner crimes, when he hears the most holy Son of God, in whose mouth was no guile, and in whom the prince of this world could find nothing, (John xiv. 30.) laden with so heinous calumniations?

SECT. 2.

Our recourse to God.

THOU art smitten with a foul tongue:—I marvel not, if it go deep into thy soul. That man gave a high praise to his sword, that said it was sharper than slander: and if a razor be yet sharper, such did David find the Edomite's tongue; Ps. lii. 2. And, if these weapons reach not yet far enough, he found both spears and arrows in the mouths of his traducers; Ps. lvii. 4.

Lo, thou art but in the same case with the man after God's own heart. What shouldst thou do, but, for David's complaint, make use of David's remedy? *I will cry unto God most high; unto God, that performeth all things for me: He shall send from heaven, and save me from the reproach of him, that would swallow me up: God shall send forth his mercy and his truth;* Ps. lvii. 2, 3.

Do by thy slander, as Hezekiah did by the railing lines of Rabshakeh, spread them before the Lord; and leave thy quarrel

in the just hands of that great Arbiter of Heaven and Earth, who will be sure, in his good time, to revenge thy wrong, and to clear thine innocence, and will *requite* thee *good for* these causeless *curses;* 2 Sam. xvi. 12.

SECT. 3.

The clearness of our conscience.

"In the mean while," thou sayest, "I stand blemished with an odious aspersion: my name passes through many a foul mouth."

Thou hearest, my son, what some others say: but what dost thou hear from the bird in thy bosom? If thy conscience acquit thee, and pronounce thee guiltless, obdure thy forehead against all the spite of malice. What is ill fame, but a little corrupted unsavoury breath? Do but turn away thine ear, that thou receive it not; and what art thou the worse? Oh, thy weakness, if thou suffer thyself to be blown over, by the mere air of some putrefied lungs; which, if thou do but a little decline by shifting thy foot, will soon vanish.

SECT. 4.

The improvement of our reason.

Thou art under ill tongues:—This is an evil proper only unto man. Other creatures are no less subject to disease, to death, to outward violence than he: but none else can be obnoxious to a detraction; since no other is capable of speech, whereout a slander can be formed. They have their several sounds and notes of expression, whereby they can signify their dislike and anger: but only man can clothe his angry thoughts with words of offence; so as that faculty, which was given him for an advantage, is depraved to a further mischief. But the same liberal hand of his Creator hath also endued him with a property of reason, which, as it ought to direct his language to others, so also to teach him how to make use of others' language to him; and, where he finds it wrongful, either to convince it by a just apology, or to contemn it. If, therefore, thou understandest thyself to lie under an unjust obloquy, have so much of man in thee, as either to confute or despise it.

SECT. 5.

The cause of our suffering.

Thou art shamefully traduced:—I could pity thy suffering; but, withal, give me leave to enquire, not so much what thou sufferest,

as for what: if for a good cause, I shall turn my pity into envy. Truth itself told thee, thou art in the way to blessedness. Who can pity thee, for that, wherein thou hast cause to rejoice? *Blessed are ye, when men revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake: Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven;* Matt. v. 11, 12. Yea, rather pluck up thy spirits; and take up the resolution of holy Job, *If mine adversary had written a book against me, surely I would take it upon my shoulders, and bind it as a crown to me;* Job xxxi. 35, 36: and say, with the gracious King of Israel, *I will be yet more vile for the Lord;* 2 Sam. vi. 22.

SECT. 6.

Our envied virtue.

THOU art reproached by lewd men:—Thank thine own virtue, that thou art envied. Wert thou so bad as thy detractors, thou shouldst sit quiet enough. *If ye were of the world,* saith our Saviour, *the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you;* John xv. 19. While the moon sits, no dogs bark at her: it is her shining, that opens their mouths. Wert thou either obscure or wicked, thou mightest be safe; but, if thou wilt needs be eminently good, look for the lashes of ill tongues. *They think it strange, that ye run not with them into the same excess of riot; speaking evil of you,* saith the prime Apostle; 1 Peter iv. 4.

It was not without reason, that the great Musician, in the Story, struck his Scholar, because he saw the multitude applaud his skill; as well knowing, that had he been true to his Art, those misjudging ears could not have approved him.

What more excellent instruments had God ever in his Church, than the blessed Apostles; and what acceptation found they on the earth? *Being defamed, we entreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day;* 1 Cor. iv. 13. *We are made a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men:* v. 9. Complain, if thou canst, of a worse condition, than these great ambassadors of the High God: otherwise, resolve, with the Chosen Vessel, to pass cheerfully through honour and dishonour, through evil report and good report, toward the goal of immortality.

SECT. 7.

Others' slighting of just reproaches.

THOU art disgraced through scandalous reports:—It is not mere air, that we live by. How many hast thou known, that have blown over a just infamy, with a careless neglect; pleasing themselves to

think, that they have thriven even under curses! And shall their guiltiness be entertained, with more courage, than thine innocence? Let those, whose heart is as foul as their name, be troubled with deserved censures: do not thou give so much way to malice, as to yield any regard to her mis-raised suggestions. Thou canst not devise how more to vex a detractor, than by contempt: thus thou shalt force spite, as that wise heathen truly said, to drink off the greatest part of her own poison.

SECT. 8.

The narrow bounds of infamy.

THOU art disgraced with an ill fame:—What a poor matter is this! How far dost thou think that sound reacheth? Perhaps, to the next village; perhaps further, to the whole shire wherein thou dwellest: it is like, the next county never heard thy name; and, if thou look yet further off, as soon mayest thou be talked of amongst the antipodes as in the neighbouring region. And what a small spot of earth is this, to which thy shame is confined! Didst thou know the vast extent of this great world, thou wouldst easily see into how narrow a corner our either glory or dishonour can be pent up; and shouldst confess, how little reason we can have to affect the one, or be disheartened with the other.

SECT. 9.

The short life of slander.

THOU art wronged with an unjust disgrace:—Have patience a while: slanders are not long lived. Truth is the child of time: ere long, she shall appear, and vindicate thee. Wait upon the God of Truth, who shall cause *thy light to break forth as the morning; and thine health to spring forth speedily;* Is. lviii. 8.

But, if otherwise, what speakest thou of this shame, which as it is local, so it is momentary; soon passed over in silence and oblivion. There is a shame, my son, which is worthy of thy fear: which is both universal before the face of all the world, of angels, and men; and, beyond the reach of time, eternal. Fear this, and contemn the other.

On the contrary, if fame should befriend thee so much as to strain her cheeks in sounding thy praises, and should cry thee up for virtuous and eminent every way; alas, how few shall hear her, and how soon is that noise stilled, and forgotten! Eccl. ix. 1.

Shortly then, let it be thy main care, to demean thyself holily and conscionably before God and men: leave the rest upon God, who shall be sure to make his word good, in spite of men and

devils, *The memory of the just shall be blessed; but the name of the wicked shall rot;* Prov. x. 7.

CHAP. VI.

COMFORTS AGAINST PUBLIC CALAMITIES.

SECT. 1.

The inevitable necessity of changes; and God's over-ruling them.

Thou art afflicted with the public calamities:—So it becomes thee, as a good man, a good Christian, a good patriot. We are not entire peers, but are all limbs of a community, both of Church and Kingdom. While the whole body suffers, how can we be free?

This should be no news to us. What earthly kingdom or state hath ever enjoyed a constant felicity? These public bodies, like as single persons, have their birth, their vigour, their declinations. Even the white marble of that famous emblem and type of God's Church, after not many centuries of years felt the dint of time, and mouldered to nothing. It is as much as those heavenly bodies above can do, to avoid change.

Well might we be distracted with these troubles, my son, if we did not well know whence they come; even from a most wise, holy, powerful, just Providence. He, that sits in heaven, orders these earthly affairs, according to the eternal counsel of his will. It is that Almighty hand, that holds the stern of this tossed vessel; and steers it in that course, which he knows best. It is not for us, that are passengers, to meddle with the card or compass. Let that All-Skilful Pilot alone, with his own work: he knows every rock and shelf, that may endanger it; and can cut the prondest billow that threatens it, with ease: *It is the Lord: let him do what seemeth him good;* 1 Sam. iii. 18.

SECT. 2.

The sense and sympathy of common evils.

Were there no other respects than personal, I cannot blame thee, if thy fears strive with thy grief for the public evils: every man's interest is involved in the common: and if the ship sink, what will become of the passengers?

But, withal, there is a kind of inbred sympathy in every good heart, which gives us a share in all others' miseries; and affects us more deeply for them, than for our own.

Old indulgent Eli loved his sons too well; and was therefore, no doubt, very sensible of their death; yet that part of the news

passed over with some, not mortal, passion: But, when he heard of the ark of God taken, now his neck and his heart were broken together; 1 Sam. iv. 17, 18: and his religious daughter-in-law, though she were delivered upon this report of a son, yet she died in travail of that heavy news; and could live only to say, *Ichabod, The glory is departed from Israel, for the ark of God is taken*; vv. 21, 22: disregarding her new son, when she heard of the loss of her people and of her God.

How many Pagans have we read of, that have died resolutely for their country; cheerfully sacrificing themselves to the public! how many, that would die with their country, hating to think of over-living the common ruin! how many, that have professed a scorn to be beholden for their lives to their people's murderer!

We shall as soon extinguish both grace and nature, as quit this compassionate sense of the common calamities.

SECT. 3.

The sure protection of the Almighty.

THOU grievest for the public distempers:—Mourn not, as one without faith. Be sure, *He, that keepeth Israel, will neither slumber nor sleep.* Wherefore was the holy tabernacle overspread with a strong tent of skins (Exod. xxvi. 7.) but to figure out unto us God's Church sheltered under a sure protection? He, that was so curious of the custody of his material temple, by night as well as by day, that a sleeping Levite might not escape beating, and burning of garments; how careful do we think he will ever be, of his spiritual and living house!

How unmeet judges are we, of his holy proceedings! We are ready to measure his love still by an outward prosperity, than which nothing can be more uncertain. The Almighty goes by other rules: such as are most consonant to his infinite justice and mercy. I am abashed to hear a Pagan*, though no vulgar one, say, "Whatsoever is brought to pass, a wise man thinks ought to be so done; neither goes about to rebuke nature, but finds it best to suffer what he cannot alter." And shall we Christians repine at those seemingly harsh events, which we see fall out in God's Church, while we are ignorant of his designs; and be ready to bless a thriving profaneness?

Look abroad, upon the ancient lot of God's inheritance, and their corrivals in glory: thou shalt see the family of Esau flourishing and renowned; yielding, besides Dukes, eight Kings of his line; while poor Israel was toiling and sweating in the Egyptian furnaces: yet we know the word to stand inviolable, *The elder shall serve the younger*; and, *Jacob have I loved, Esau have I hated.*

What if that great and wise God, who works oftimes by contraries and brings light out of darkness, have purposed to fetch

* Sen. Ep. 107.

honour and happiness to his Church out of this sad affliction? Metals are never so bright, as when they are scoured; perfumes and spices never so redolent, as when they have felt the fire and the pestle. Wilt thou not give the physician leave to make use of his mithridate, because there are vipers in the composition? How unworthy art thou of health, if thou wilt not trust the fidelity and skill of the artist, in mixing so wholesome a cordial!

SECT. 4.

The justice of God's proceedings.

THOU art troubled with the public miseries:—Take heed that thy grief be clear of all impiety. Wouldst thou not have God to be just, that is, himself? Wouldst thou not allow it an act of his justice, to punish sins? Canst thou deny that our sins have reached up to heaven, and called for judgment? *Why is the living man sorrowful? man suffereth for his sins;* Lam. iii. 39.

I read of a devout man, that was instant with God in his prayers, for a nation not far off; and was answered, "Suffer the proud to be humbled." Whether we will suffer it or no, the just God will humble the proud, and punish the sinful.

The wonderful patience, and infinite justice of the Almighty, hath set a stint to the wickedness of every people: *The iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full,* saith God to Abraham; Gen. xv. 16. when the measure is once made up, it is time for God to strike: we shall then complain in vain, and too late.

Wouldst thou know then, what is to be done for the preventing of a destructive vengeance? There is no way under heaven, but this, to break off our sins by a seasonable and serious repentance: by the united forces of our holy resolutions and endeavours, to make a head against the overbearing wickedness of the time; and not to suffer it to fill up towards the brim of that fatal ephah; till which time the long-suffering God only threatens and corrects a people, but then he plagues them, and stands upon the necessity of his inviolable justice: *Shall I not visit for these things? saith the Lord: and shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?* Jer. v. 9.

SECT. 5.

The remedy, our particular repentance.

THOU mournest for the common sufferings:—Thou dost well: our tears can never be better bestowed. But, the while, is not thy hand in them? have not thy sins helped to make up this irritating heap? hast not thou cast in thy symbol, into the common shot? May not the times justly challenge thee in part, as accessary to

their misery? Begin at home, my son, if thou wish well to the public; and make thine own peace with thy God, for thy particular offences. Renew thy covenant with God, of a more holy and strict obedience; and then pour out thy prayers and tears, for a universal mercy: so shalt thou not only pull away one brand from this consuming fire, but help effectually to quench the common conflagration.

SECT. 6.

The unspeakable miseries of a civil war.

THY heart bleeds to see the woeful vastation of civil discord; and the deadly fury of home-bred enemies:—

Certainly, there is nothing under heaven more ghastly and dreadful, than the face of an intestine war; nothing, that doth so nearly resemble hell. Woe is me! here is altogether killing, and dying, and torturing, and burning, and shrieks, and cries; and ejulations, and fearful sounds, and furious violences, and whatsoever may either cause or increase horror. The present calamity oppresses one: another, fear: one is quivering in death: another trembles to expect it: one begs for life: another will sell it dearer: here, one would rescue one life, and loseth two; there, another would hide himself, where he finds a merciless death: here lies one bleeding, and groaning, and gasping, parting with his soul in extremity of anguish; there, another of stronger spirits kills and dies, at once: here, one wrings her hands, and tears her hair, and seeks for some instrument of a self-inflicted death, rather than yield her chaste body to the lust of a bloody ravisher; there, another clings inseparably to a dear husband, and will rather take part of the murderer's sword, than let go her last embraces: here, one, tortured for the discovery of hid treasure; there, another, dying upon the rack, out of jealousy.

Oh, that one man, one Christian should be so bloodily cruel to another! Oh, that he, who bears the image of the merciful God, should thus turn fiend to his own flesh and blood! These are terrible things, my son, and worthy of our bitterest lamentations and just fears.

I love the speculation of Seneca's resolutely-wise man*, that could look upon the glittering sword of an executioner, with erected and undazzled eyes; that makes it no matter or difference, whether his soul pass out at his mouth or at his throat: but I should more admire the practice. While we carry this clay about us, nature cannot but, in the holiest men, shrink in at the sight and sense of these tyrannous and tragical acts of death.

Yet even these are the due revenges of the Almighty's punitive justice; so provoked by our sins, as that it may not take up with an

* Sen. Ep. 70.

easier judgment. Dost thou not see it ordinary with our physicians, when they find the body highly distempered, and the blood foul and enflamed, to order the opening of a vein; and the drawing out of so many ounces, as may leave the rest meet for correction? Why art thou over-troubled, to see the Great Physician of the World take this course with sinful mankind? Certainly, had not this great body, by mis-dieting and wilful disorder, contracted these spiritual diseases under which we languish; had it not impured the blood, that runs in these common veins, with riot and surfeits; we had never been so miserable, as to see these torrents of Christian blood running down our channels. Now yet, as it is, could we bewail and abandon our former wickedness, we might live in hope, that, at last, this deadly issue might stop and dry up; and that there might be yet left a possibility of a blessed recovery.

SECT. 7.

The woeful miseries of Pestilence, allayed by consideration of the hand that smites us.

Thou art confounded with grief, to see the pestilence raging in our streets; in so frequent a mortality, as breeds a question concerning the number of the living and the dead: that, which is wont to abate other miseries, heightens this; the company of participants:—

It was certainly a very hard and sad option, that God gave to King David, after his sin of numbering the people: *Choose thee, whether seven years' famine shall come unto thee in thy land, or three months' flight before thine enemies, or three days' pestilence;* 2 Sam. xxiv. 13. We may believe the good King, when we hear him say, *I am in a great strait.* Doubtless, so he was: but his wise resolutions have soon brought him out; *Let us fall now into the hand of the Lord, for his mercies are great; and let me not fall into the hand of man.*

He, that was to send these evils, knew their value; and the difference of their malignity: yet he opposes three days' pestilence, to seven years' famine, and three months' vanquishment: so much odds he knew there was, betwixt the dull activity of man and the quick dispatch of an angel.

It was a favour, that the angel of death, who in one night destroyed a hundred fourscore and five thousand Assyrians (2 Kings xix. 35.), should, in three days, cut off but seventy thousand Israelites: it was a great mercy it was no worse. We read of one, city shall I call it, or region, of Cairo, wherein eighteen hundred thousand were swept away in one year's pestilence; enow, one would think, to have peopled the whole earth: and, in our own Chronicles, of so general a mortality, that the living were hardly sufficient to bury the dead.

These are dreadful demonstrations of God's heavy displeasure;

but yet there is this alleviation of our misery, that we suffer more immediately from a holy, just, merciful God. The Kingly Prophet had never made that distinction in his woeful choice, if he had not known a notable difference, betwixt the sword of an angel and an enemy; betwixt God's more direct and immediate infliction, and that which is derived to us through the malice of men. It was but a poor consolation, that is given by a victorious enemy to dying Lausus, in the Poet; "Comfort thyself in thy death with this, that thou fallest by the hand of great Æneas:" but, surely, we have just reason to raise comfort to our souls, when the pains of a pestilential death compass us about, from the thought and intuition of that holy and gracious hand, under which we suffer; so as we can say, with good Eli, *It is the Lord.* It is not amiss, that we call those marks of deadly infection "God's Tokens:" such, sure, they are; and ought, therefore, to call up our eyes and hearts to that Almighty power that sends them, with the faithful resolution of holy Job, *Though thou kill me, yet will I trust in thee.*

It is none of the least miseries of contagious sickness, that it bars us from the comfortable society and attendance of friends; or, if otherwise, repays their love and kind visitation with death. Be not dismayed, my son, with this sad solitude: thou hast company with thee, whom none infection can endanger or exclude: there is an invisible friend, that will be sure to stick by thee so much more closely, by how much thou art more avoided by neighbours: and will make all thy bed in thy sickness; and supply thee with those cordials, which thou shouldest in vain expect from earthly visitants.

Indeed, justly do we style this, "The Sickness;" eminently grievous, both for the deadliness and generality of the dispersion: yet there is a remedy, that can both cure and confine it. Let but every man look well to the plague of his own heart, and the land is healed. Can we, with David, but see the angel that smites us: and erect an altar; and offer to God the sacrifices of our prayers, penitence, obedience? we shall hear him say, *It is enough;* 2 Sam. xxiv. 16. The time was, and that time may not be forgotten, when, in the days of our late Sovereign, our Mother City was almost desolated with this mortal infection; when *thousands fell at our side, and ten thousands at our right-hand;* Ps. xci. 7. Upon the public humiliation of our souls, the mercy of the Almighty was pleased to command that raging disease, in the height of its fury, like some headstrong horse in the midst of his career, to stop on the sudden; and to leave us at once, ere we could think of it, both safe and healthful. *This* was *the Lord's doing, and it* was *marvellous in our eyes. Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear;* Is. lix. 1. The same mercy is everlasting; the same remedy certain: be we but penitent, and we cannot be miserable.

CHAP. VII.

COMFORTS AGAINST LOSS OF FRIENDS.

SECT. 1.

The true value of a friend; and the fault of over-prizing him.

THOU hast lost thy friend:—The sorrow is just; the earth hath nothing more precious, than that, which thou hast parted with: for what is a friend, but a man's self in another skin; a soul divided into two bodies, both which are animated by the same spirit? It is somewhat worse with thee therefore, than with a palsied man, whose one half is stricken with a dead kind of numbness: he hath lost but the use of one side of his body; thou, the one half of thy soul. Or, may I not with better warrant say, that a true friend hath, as it were, two souls in one body; his own, and his friend's? Sure I am, so it was with Jonathan and David: *The soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David; and Jonathan loved him as his own soul;* 1 Sam. xviii. 1.

Still the more goodness, the stronger union. Mere nature can never be so fast a cement of souls, as grace: for here the union is wrought by a better spirit than our own; even that Blessed Spirit, who styles himself by the name of *Love;* 1 John iv. 16.

By how much greater thine affection was, so much heavier is thy loss.

But, let me tell thee, I fear thou art too much accessary to thine own affliction. Didst thou look for this loss? Did thy heart say, "What if we should part?" Didst thou not over-enjoy this blessing, whilst thou hadst it? Surely, these are no small disadvantages: as every other evil, so this especially, is aggravated by our unexpectation. Neither hadst thou been so oppressed with this sorrow, if thou hadst foreseen it, and met it on the way. It is our weak inconsideration, if we do so welcome these earthly comforts, not as guests, but as inmates; and, as some that are importunately hospitable, so entertain our friends, that we cannot abide to give them leave to depart: whereas, we ought, according to the wise advice of our Seneca*, not much abluding from the counsel of that blessed Apostle with whom he is said to have interchanged Letters, so to possess them, as those, that make account to forego them; and so forego them, as if we possessed them still; 1 Cor. vii. 30, 31.

* Sen. Ep. 63.

SECT. 2.

The true ground of an undefeasible enjoying of our friends.

THOU art grieved for the loss of a dear friend:—Take heed, lest thy love had too much of the man, and too little of God. All blessings, as they come down from the Father of Mercies, so should be enjoyed in him: and, if we enjoy them as in themselves, our love begins to degenerate into carnal.

It is a sure rule, That all love, that depends upon a thing affected, when that thing ceaseth, then the love ceaseth: as he, that loves a face only for beauty, when that beauty is defaced by deformity, presently cools in his affection: he, that respects a man for his bounty only, disregards him, when he sees him impoverished. Didst thou value thy friend only for his wit, for his ready compliances, for his kind offices? all these are now lost, and thy love with them: but if thou didst affect him for eminence of grace, for the sake of that God that dwelt in him; now thy love is not, cannot be lost, because thou still enjoyest that God, in whom thou lovedst him. Comfort thyself, therefore, in that God, in whom he was thine; and yield him cheerfully into those hands, that lent him thee.

SECT. 3.

The rarity and trial of true friends.

THOU hast lost a true friend:—That jewel was worthy to be so much more precious, by how much more rare it is.

The world affords friends enow, such as they are; friends of the purple, as Tertullian calls them; friends of the basket, as the Poet: such as love thy loaves and fishes, and thee for them. *Wealth makes many friends*, saith the Wise Man; Prov. xiv. 20. xix. 4.

But, where is the man, that loves thee for thyself? that loves thy virtue, and thee for it; divested of all by-respects? While there is honey in thy gallipot, the wasps and flies will be buzzing about it; but which of them cares to light upon an empty vessel? Was he so much thine, that he would not be set off by thine adversity? Did he honour thee, when thou wert despised of the world? Did he follow thee with applause, while thou wert hooted at by the multitude? Would he have owned thee, if he had found thee stripped and wounded in the wilderness? Such a friend is worthy of thy tears.

But take heed thy love prove not envious. If thy God hath thought him fitter for the society of Saints and Angels, dost thou repine at his happiness? Thou hast lost his presence: he is advanced to the beatifical presence of the King of Glory. Whether is thy loss, or his gain, the greater?

SECT. 4.

It is but a parting; not a loss.

THOU hast lost thy friend:—Say, rather, thou hast parted with him. That is properly lost, which is past all recovery, which we are out of hope to see any more. It is not so with this friend thou mournest for: he is but gone home, a little before thee; thou art following him: you two shall meet, in your Father's house; and enjoy each other more happily, than you could have done here below.

How just is that charge of the blessed Apostle, that we should *not mourn, as men without hope, for those, that do but sleep in Jesus!* 1 Thess. iv. 13, 14. Did we think their souls vanished into air, as that Heathen Poet profanely expresseth it; and their bodies resolved into dust, without all possibility of reparation; we might well cry out our eyes, for the utter extinction of those we loved: but, if *they do* but *sleep, they shall do well*; John xi. 12. Why are we impatient, for their silent reposal in the bed of their grave, when we are assured of their awaking to glory?

SECT. 5.

The loss of a virtuous wife, mitigated.

THOU hast lost a dear wife, *the wife of thy youth, the desire of thine eyes*; Prov. v. 18. Is. liv. 6. Ezek. xxiv. 16.—Did ye not take one another upon the terms of re-delivery, when you should be called for? Were you not, in your very knitting, put in mind of your dissolution? "Till death us do part."

Was she virtuous? Knowest thou not that there was a precontract, betwixt thy Saviour and her soul, ere thou couldst lay any claim to her body? and canst thou now grudge his just challenge of his own? wilt thou not allow him to call for a consummation of that happy match? Didst thou so over-love her outside, that thou wouldst not have her soul glorious? If thou lovedst her not as a man, but as a Christian, envy her not to that better Husband above, who gives her no less dowry than immortality.

SECT. 6.

The mitigation of the loss of a dear and hopeful son.

THY son is dead:—What marvel is it, that a mortal father hath begot a mortal son? Marvel rather, that thyself hath lived to have or to lose a son. We lie open to so many deaths, that our very subsistance is almost miraculous.

Thou hast lost a piece of thy flesh: for, what are our children,

but as colonies deduced from our own flesh? yea, rather ourselves made up in other models. This loss cannot but go near thee.

But, tell me, what was the disposition of the son thou mournest for?

If he were graceless and debauched, as thy shame so thy sorrow should die with him: set the hopes thou mightest have had of his reclaiming against the fears of his continuing and increasing wickedness, and thou couldst have made no other present account but of dishonour and discomfort. If it be sad, that he is taken away in his wildness; it had been more heavy, that he would have added to the heap of his sin, and therein to his torments.

If he were gracious, he had a better Father than thyself, whose interest was more in him than thine: and if that Heavenly Father have thought good to prefer him to a crown of immortal glory, why shouldst thou be afflicted with his advancement? Why shouldst thou not rather rejoice, that thy loins have helped to furnish heaven with a Saint? Were it put to thy choice, that thy son might be called off from his blessed rest, and return to his former earthly relations; couldst thou be so injurious in thy self-love, as to wish the misery of so disadvantageous a change to that soul, which, as it was never of thy production, so it were pity it should be at thy disposing? Rather labour to have thine own soul so disposed, that it may be ready to follow him into those blessed mansions; and that it may love and long for heaven so much more, for that one piece of thee is there beforehand.

CHAP. VIII.

COMFORTS AGAINST POVERTY, AND LOSS OF OUR ESTATE.

SECT. 1.

The fickle nature of these earthly goods.

THOU art driven into want; and, that which is worse, out of abundance:—Those evils, that we have been inured to as being bred up with us from our cradle, are grown so familiar, that we are little moved with their presence: but those, into which we fall suddenly out of an outward felicity of estate, are ready to overwhelm us. Let thy care be, not to want those better riches, which shall make thy soul happy; and thou shalt not be too much troubled, with the loss of this trivial and perishing stuff.

Had these been true goods, they could not have been lost. for that good, that is at last capable of loss, as it is unsatisfying in the time of an imperfect and unsure fruition; so, in losing, it turns evil. Did'st thou not know that *riches have wings?* Prov. xxiii. 5: and

what use is there of wings, if not to fly? If another man's violence shall clip those wings, even this very clipping is their flight. Set thy heart upon that excellent and precious wealth, which can never be taken from thee; which shall never leave thee, nor thou it; thou shalt easily slight these poor losses.

As these were not goods; so they were not thine. Here, thou foundest them; and here, thou leavest them; 1 Tim. vi. 7. What hadst thou, but their use? Neither can they be otherwise thine heir's, whom thou leavest behind thee. I am ashamed to hear the Heathen Philosopher say, "All that is mine, I carry about me;" when many of us Christians are ready to hug those things, as most ours, which are without ourselves. It was an unanswerable question, which God moves to the rich man in the Parable, upon the parting with his soul: *Then, whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?* Luke xii. 20. perhaps, a stranger's; perhaps, as in case of undisposed lands, the occupant's; perhaps, a false executor's; perhaps, an enemy's. Call that thine, that thou shalt be sure to carry away with thee; that shall either accompany thy soul in its last passage, or follow it: such shall be thy holy graces, thy charitable works, thy virtuous actions, thy heavenly dispositions. Lo, these are the treasures, which thou shalt *lay up for thyself in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt; where thieves do not break through nor steal;* Matt. vi. 20.

SECT. 2.

They are not ours; but lent us.

THOU hast lost thy goods:—May I not rather say, thou hast restored them? He parted with more than thou, that said, *The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken;* Job. i. 21.

Lo, whether it were by way of patrimony, or by way of providence and industry, the Lord gave it; and, whether it were by the hands of Chaldeans or Sabeans, the Lord hath taken it. The Lord is in both: he did but give and take his own. Is it not just so with thee? What reason hast thou then to complain?

Or may I not yet rather say, it was not given, but lent thee for a while, till it were called for? and dost thou grudge to restore, what thou borrowedst?

Nay, that thou mayest have yet less claim to this pelf, was it not only left in thy hand by the owner to employ for his use, till he should re-demand it with the increase? What is it to thee, but to improve and account for? If others have taken off thy charge, while they have spoiled they have eased thee.

SECT. 3.

The right valuation of riches is in the mind.

THY wealth is gone:—Hast thou necessaries left? Be thankful for what thou hast: forget what thou hadst.

Hadst thou had more, thou couldst have made use of no more than nature calls for: the rest could but have lain by thee, for sight, for readiness of employment.

Do but forbear the thought of superfluities, and what art thou the worse? Perhaps, thy fare is coarser, thy dishes fewer, thy utensils meaner, thy clothes homelier, thy train shorter: what of this? how is thy mind affected? Contentment stands not in quantities, nor in qualities; but in the inward disposition of the heart. That alone can multiply numbers, and raise prices: that alone can turn honest friezes into rich velvets, pulse into delicacies; and can make one attendant many officers.

Wise Seneca tells thee truly *, that the true mould of wealth is our body, as the last is of the shoe: if the shoe be too big for the foot, it is but troublesome and useless; and how poor an answer would it be of the cordwainer to say, that he had leather good store! It is fitness, which is to be regarded here, not largeness.

Neither is this any other than the charge of the blessed Apostle; *Having food and raiment, let us be therewith content;* 1 Tim. vi. 8. And if we have no more, we shall be but as we were, as we shall be: *For we brought nothing into the world, neither shall we carry any thing out;* v. 7.

SECT. 4.

It may be good for us to be held short.

THOU hast parted with thy wealth:—Perhaps, for thine own good. How many have we known, that have been cumbered with plenty, like as the ostrich or bustard with bulk of body, so as they could not raise their thoughts to spiritual things: who, when their weight hath been taken off, have mounted nimbly towards their heaven! How many have we known, that had lost their lives, if, with the Philosopher, they had not foregone their gold! Yea, how many, that had lost their precious souls! The whole vessel had sunk in this boisterous sea, if the luggage of this earthly freight had not been cast overboard. And why art thou so troubled to lose that, which might have undone thee in the keeping?

* Sen. Ep. 107.

SECT. 5.

The danger of abundance.

THOU hadst wealth:—Hast thou not parted with that, for which many a man hath been the worse? worse, both in body and soul: and by which never any soul was better? Have we not seen many good corn-fields marred with rankness? have we not seen many a good bough split with the weight of too much fruit? Whereas those fields, had they been either thinner sown or seasonably eaten down, had yielded a fair crop; and those boughs, had they been but moderately laden, had outlived many autumns.

Dost thou not hear thy Saviour say, *How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!* Mark x. 23. Art thou troubled, that there is a rub removed out of thy way to happiness? that the bunch of the camel is taken off, if yet thou mayest pass through the eye of the needle?

SECT. 6.

The cares that attend wealth.

THOU hadst riches:—But hadst thou not cares to boot? Surely, else thou hast fared better than all thy neighbours. Nobody, but thyself, could ever handle these roses, without pricking his fingers.

He * was famous amongst the Jewish Doctors, whose rule it was, "He, that multiplies riches, multiplies cares:" and our Blessed Saviour hath coupled these two together, *The cares of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches;* Mark iv. 19.

We have heard of one, who was glad to be rid of his lately-found bag, that he might sleep and sing again. He was noted and envied at Rome for his wealth, which could experimentally say, "The poor man laughs more often and more heartily than the rich †:" and tells us, that "outward felicity is an unquiet thing, never ceasing to vex itself ‡."

Thy sides are now rid of these thorns: why dost thou grumble at thine own ease?

SECT. 7.

The imperiousness of ill-used wealth.

THOU lately possessedst great riches:—Yea, mayest thou not rather say, thou wert possessed of them?

That wise Roman truly observed, that "many a one hath wealth,

* Rab. Gamaliel. † Sen. Ep. 80. ‡ Epist. 36.

as we are wont to say, a man hath taken an ague; when, indeed, the ague hath taken him, and holds him in a painful manner *." The truth is, many a man's wealth is his master, and keeps him under hard conditions; not allowing him sufficient diet, not competent rest, not any recreation. If thou wert thus a drudge to thine estate, thou art now thine own man: enjoy thy liberty; and, together with thy patience, be thankful.

SECT. 8.

The causes and means of impoverishing us.

THOU art very poor:—Who made thee so?

If thine own negligence, laziness, improvidence, unthriftiness, rash engagements; thou hadst reason to bear that burthen, which thou hast pulled upon thine own shoulders: and, if thou be forced to make many hard faces under the load; yet, since thy own will hath brought upon thee this necessity, even the necessity should move thy will to trudge away, as lightly and as fast as thou mayest, with that pressing weight.

If the mere oppression and injury of others, thou shalt the more comfortably run away with this cross, because thine own hand hath not been guilty of imposing it. How easy is it for thee here, to see God's hand chastising thee by another man's sin! and more to be grieved at the sin of that other's wrong, than at thine own smart!

How sad a thing it is, for any good soul to see brethen a prey to each other! that neighbours should be like the reed and the brake set near together, whereof the one starves the other! that we should have daily occasion to renew that woeful comparison of our Bromiard †, betwixt the friends and enemies of Christ; That Jews do not suffer beggars; that Christians make beggars!

In the mean time, if God think fit to send poverty to thy door upon the message of men, bid it welcome, for the sake of him, that sent it; and entertain it, not grudgingly, for its own sake; as that, which, if it be well used, will repay thee with many blessings: the blessings of quiet rest, safe security, humble patience, contented humility, contemptuous valuation of these earthly things; all which had balked thy house, in a prosperous condition.

SECT. 9.

The examples of those who have affected poverty.

THOU art stripped of thy former conveniences for diet, for lodging, for attendance:—How many have purposely affected to do that our

* Ep 1. 2. † Brom. V. Eleemosyn.

of choice, which is befallen thee upon need: some, out of the grounds of philosophy; others, of religion!

Attalus, the philosopher, might have lain soft; yet he calls for and praises the bed and pillow, that will not yield to his body *: and Nero's great and rich master brags of his usual dining without a table †.

What should I tell then of the Pharisees' uneasy couches and penal garments? of the mats of the elect Manichees? of the austere usages of the ancient Eremitical Christians? their rigorous abstinences, their affamishing meals, their nightly watchings, their cold ground-lyings, their sharp disciplines?

Thou art in ease and delicacy, in comparison of these men, who voluntarily imposed upon themselves these hardnesses, which thou wouldst be loth to undergo from others' cruelty.

It was a strange word of Epicurus, the philosopher, not savouring of more contentment than presumption: "Give us but water, give us but barley-meal, and we shall vie with Jupiter himself for happiness ‡:" and if this Ethnic, who was in an ill name for affectation of pleasure, could rest so well pleased with a poor mess of water-gruel; what a shame were it for us Christians, not to be well apaid with a much larger, though but homely, provision!

CHAP. IX.

COMFORTS AGAINST IMPRISONMENT.

SECT. 1.

The nature and power of true liberty.

THOU art restrained of thy liberty:—I cannot blame thee to be sensible of the affliction. Liberty is wont to hold competition for dearness, with life itself: yea, how many have lost their life, to purchase their liberty!

But, take heed, lest thou be either mistaken, or guilty of thine own complaint: for, certainly, thou canst not be bereaved of thy liberty, except thou wilt. Liberty is a privilege of the will: will is a sovereign power, that is not subject to either restraint or constraint. Hast thou, therefore, a freedom within; a full scope to thine own thoughts? It is not the cooping up of these outward parts, that can make thee a Prisoner.

Thou art not worthy of the name of a man, if thou thinkest this body to be thyself: and that is only it, which human power can reach unto.

* Sen. Epist. 108. † Epist. 83. ‡ Epic. in Ep. Sen. 110.

Besides, art thou a Christian? then thou hast learned to submit thy will to God's: God's will is declared in his actions; for, sure, what he doth, that he wills to do. If his will be then to have thee restrained, why should it not be thine? And, if it be thy will to keep in, what dost thou complain of restraint?

SECT. 2.

The sad objects of a free beholder's eye.

THOU art restrained:—Is it such a matter, that thou art not suffered to come abroad? How ill hast thou spent thy time, if thou hast not laid up matter, both of employment and contentment, in thine own bosom!

And what such goodly pleasure were it for thee, to look over the world, and to behold those objects which thine eye shall there meet withal: here, men fighting; there, women and children wailing: here, plunders; there, riots: here, fields of blood; there, towns and cities flaming: here, some scuffling for patrimonies; there, others wrangling for religion: here, some famishing for want; there, others abusing their fulness: here, schisms and heresies; there, rapines and sacrileges! What comfortable spectacles these are, to attract or please our eyes! Thy closeness frees thee from these sights; the very thought whereof is enough to make a man miserable: and, instead of them, presents thee only with the face of thy keeper, which custom, and necessity, hath acquitted from thy first horror.

SECT. 3.

The invisible company, that cannot be kept from us.

THOU art shut up close within four walls, and all company is secluded from thee:—Content thyself, my son: God and his angels cannot be kept out: thou hast better company in thy solitude, than thy liberty afforded thee. The jollity of thy freedom robbed thee of the conversation of these spiritual companions, which only can render thee happy: they, which before were strangers to thee, are now thy guests; yea, thy inmates, if the fault be not thine, to dwell with thee in that forced retiredness.

What if the light be shut out from thee? This cannot hinder thee from seeing the Invisible: *The darkness hideth not from thee*; saith the Psalmist; *but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee*; Ps. cxxxix. 12.

Yea, I doubt not to say, God hath never been so clearly seen, as in the darkest dungeons; for the outward light of prosperity distracts our visive beams, which are strongly contracted in a deep ob-

security. He must descend low, and be compassed with darkness, that would see the glorious lights of heaven by day: they ever shine; but are not seen, save in the night.

May thine eyes be blessed with this invisible sight, thou shalt not envy those that glitter in court, and that look daily upon the faces of kings and princes; yea, though they could see all that the Tempter represented to the view of our Saviour upon the highest mountain; *all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them.*

SECT. 4.

The inward disposition of the prisoner.

THOU art forced to keep close:—But with what disposition, both of mind and body? If thou hadst an unquiet and burdened soul, it were not the open and free air, that could refresh thee; and if thou have a clear and light heart, it is not a strict closeness, that can dismay thee: thy thoughts can keep thee company, and cheer up thy solitariness. If thou hadst an unsound and painful body; as, if thou wert laid up of the gout, or some rupture, or luxation of some limb; thou wouldst not complain to keep in: thy pain would make thee insensible of the trouble of thy confinement: But, if God have favoured thee with health of body, how easily mayest thou digest a harmless limitation of thy person!

A wise man, as Laurentius the Presbyter observed well, doth much while he rests: his motions are not so beneficial, as his sitting still. So mayest thou bestow the hours of thy close retiredness, that thou mayest have cause to bless God for so happy an opportunity.

How memorable an instance hath our age yielded us, of an eminent person *, to whose encagement we are beholden, besides many philosophical experiments, for that noble History of the World, which is now in our hands! The Court had his youthful and freer times; the Tower, his later age: the Tower reformed the Court in him; and produced those worthy monuments of art and industry, which we should have in vain expected from his freedom and jollity. It is observed, that shining wood, when it is kept within doors, loseth its light. It is otherwise with this and many other active wits, which had never shined so much, if not for their closeness.

SECT. 5.

The willing choice of retiredness in some persons.

THOU art close shut up:—I have seen anchorites, that have sued for this as a favour, which thou esteemest a punishment; and, hav-

* Sir Walter Raleigh.

ing obtained it, have placed merit in that wherein thou apprehendest misery. Yea, our History tells us of one, who, when the church, whereto his cell was annexed, was on fire, would not come out to live; but would die, and lie buried under the ashes of that roof, where his vow had fixed him. Suppose thou dost that out of the resolution of thine own will, which thou dost out of another's necessitating, and thou shalt sit down contented with thy lot.

SECT. 6.

The causes of imprisonment.

THOU art imprisoned:—Wise men are wont, in all actions and events, to enquire still into the causes. Wherefore dost thou suffer?

Is it for thy fault? Make thou thy gaol God's Correction-House for reforming of thy misdeeds. Remember, and imitate Manasseh, the evil son of a good father; who, upon true humiliation, by his just imprisonment, found a happy expiation of his horrible idolatries, murders, witchcrafts; whose bonds brought him home to God and himself.

Is it for debt? Think not to pay those who have entrusted thee, with a lingering durance, if there be power in thy hand for a discharge: there is fraud, and injustice, in this closeness: fear thou a worse prison, if thou wilt needs wilfully live and die in a just indebtment, when thou mayest be at once free and honest: stretch thine ability to the utmost, to satisfy others with thine own impoverishing. But, if the hand of God hath humbled and disabled thee, labour what thou canst to make thy peace with thy creditors: if they will needs be cruel, look up with patience to the hand of that God, who thinks fit to afflict thee with their unreasonableness; and make the same good use of thy sufferings, which thou wouldst do from the immediate hand of thy Creator.

If it be for a good cause, rejoice in this tribulation; and be holily proud and glad, with the blessed Apostles, that thou art *counted worthy to suffer shame and bonds for the name of the Lord Jesus;* Acts v. 41: for every just cause is his: neither is he less a martyr, that suffers for his conscience in any of God's commandments, than he who suffers for matter of faith and religion. Remember that cordial word of thy Saviour, *Blessed are they, that are persecuted for righteousness' sake; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

In such a prison, thou shalt be sure to find good company. There, thou shalt find Joseph, Micaiah, Jeremiah, John Baptist, Peter, Paul and Silas, and (what should I think of the poll?) all the holy Martyrs and Confessors of Jesus Christ, from the first plantation of the Gospel to this present day. Repent thee, if thou canst, to be thus matched; and choose rather to violate a good conscience and be free, than to keep it under a momentary restraint.

SECT. 7.

The goodness of retiredness; and the partnership of the soul's imprisonment.

Thou art a prisoner:—Make the best of thy condition: close air is warmer than open: and how ordinarily do we hear birds sing sweeter notes in their cages, than they could do in the wood! It shall be thine own fault, if thou be not bettered by thy retiredness.

Thou art a prisoner:—so is thy soul in thy body: there, not restrained only, but fettered; yet complains not of the straitness of these clay walls or the weight of these bonds, but patiently waits for a happy gaol-delivery. So do thou attend, with all long-suffering, the good hour of the pleasure of thy God. Thy period is set, not without a regard to thy good; yea, to thy best. He, in whose hand are all times, shall find and hath determined a fit time, to free both thy body from these outward prison-walls, and thy soul from this prison of thy body; and to restore both body and soul *from the bondage of corruption, to the glorious liberty of the sons of God*; Rom. viii. 21.

CHAP. X.

COMFORTS AGAINST BANISHMENT.

SECT. 1.

The universality of a wise man's country.

Thou art banished from thy country:—Beware lest, in thy complaining, thou censure thyself. A wise man's country is every where. What such relation hath the place, wherein thou wert born, to thy present being? What, more than the time, wherein thou wert born? What reason hast thou to be more addicted to the region, wherein thou fellest, than to the day of the week, or hour of the day, in which thou salutedst the light? What are times and places of our birth, but inconcerning circumstances? Wherever thou farest well, thou mayest either find or make thy country.

"But," thou sayest, "there is a certain secret property in our native soil, that draws our affection to it; and ties our hearts to it, not without a pleasing kind of delight, whereof no reason can be yielded: so as we affect the place, not because it is better than others; but it is because it is our own *. Ulysses doth no less value the rocky soil of his hard and barren Ithaca, than Agamemnon doth the noble walls of his rich and pleasant Mycenæ."

* Sen. Ep. 66.

I grant this relation hath so powerful an influence upon our hearts naturally, as is pretended: yet such a one, as is easily checked with a small unkindness. How many have we known, who, upon an actual affront, not of the greatest, have diverted their respects from their native country; and, out of a strong alienation of mind, have turned their love into hostility! We shall not need to seek far for histories: our times and memories will furnish us too well. Do we not see those, who have sucked the breasts of our Common Mother, upon a little dislike to have spit in her face? Can we not name our late home-bred compatriots, who, upon the disrelish of some displeasing laws, have flown off from their country, and suborned treasons, and incited foreign princes to our invasion? So as thou seest this natural affection is not so ardent in many, but that it may be quenched with a mean discontentment. If, therefore, there were no other ground of thine affliction, thy sorrow is not so deep-rooted, but that it may be easily pulled up.

SECT. 2.

The benefit of self-conversation.

"IT is not the air or earth," that thou standest upon: "it is the company," thou sayest, "from which it is a kind of death to part. I shall leave all acquaintance and conversation, and be cast upon strange faces, and languages that I understand not: my best entertainment will be solitude; my ordinary, inhospitality."

What dost thou affright thyself, my son, with these bugs of needless terror? He is not worthy of the name of a Philosopher, much less of a Christian Divine, that hat not attained to be absolute in himself; and, which way soever he is cast, to stand upon his own bottom; and that, if there were no other men left in the world, could not tell how to enjoy himself. It is that within us, whereby we must live and be happy: some additions of complacency may come from without: sociable natures, such is man's, seek and find pleasure in conversation; but if that be denied, sanctified spirits know how to converse comfortably with their God and themselves.

SECT. 3.

Examples of those holy ones, that have abandoned society.

How many holy ones of old have purposely withdrawn themselves from the company of men, that they might be blessed with an invisible society; that have exchanged cities for deserts, houses for caves, the sight of men for beasts; that their spiritual eyes might be fixed upon those better objects, which the frequence of the world held from them! Necessity doth but put thee into that estate, which their piety affected.

"Oh! but to be driven to forsake parents, kinsfolk, friends, how sad a case must it needs be! What is this, other than a perfect distraction? What are we, but pieces of our parents? And what are friends, but parts of us? What is all the world to us, without these comforts?"

When thou hast said all, my son, what is befallen thee, other than it pleased God to enjoin the Father of the Faithful: *Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, into a land that I will shew thee?* Gen. xii. 1. Lo, the same God, by the command of authority, calls thee to this secession. If thou wilt shew thyself worthy to be the son of such a Father, do that, in an humble obedience to God, which thou art urged to do, by the compulsion of men.

But what so grievous a thing is this? Dost thou think to find God where thou goest? Dost thou make full account of his company both all along the way, and in the end of thy journey? Hath not He said, who cannot fail, *I will not leave thee nor forsake thee?* Certainly, he is not worthy to lay any claim to a God, that cannot find parents, kindred, friends in him alone.

Besides, he, that of very stones could raise up children unto Abraham, how easily can he of inhospital men raise up friends to the sons of Abraham! Only labour thou to inherit that faith, wherein he walked: that alone shall free-denizen thee, in the best of foreign states; and shall entertain thee, in the wildest deserts.

SECT. 4.

The advantage that hath been made of removing.

THOU art cast upon a foreign nation:—Be of good cheer: we know that flowers, removed, grow greater; and some plants, which were but unthriving and unwholesome in their own soil, have grown both safe and flourishing in other climates. Had Joseph been ever so great, if he had not been transplanted into Egypt? Had Daniel and his three companions of the captivity ever attained to that honour, in their native land? How many have we known, that have found that health in a change of air, which they could not meet with at home! In Africk, the south wind clears up; and the north is rainy. Look thou up still to that hand, which hath translated thee: await his good pleasure: be thou no stranger to thy God: it matters not who are strangers unto thee.

SECT. 5.

The right that we have in any country, and in God.

THOU art a banished man:—How canst thou be so, when thou treadest upon thy Father's ground? *The earth is the Lord's, and the*

fulness of it. In his right, wherever thou art, thou mayest challenge a spiritual interest: *All things,* saith the Apostle, *are yours; and you are Christ's; and Christ is God's;* 1 Cor. iii. 21, 22, 23. No man can challenge thee for a stranger, that is not thy Father's child.

Thine exile separates thee from thy friends:—This were no small affliction, if it might not be abundantly remedied. That was a true word of Laurentius, that "where two faithful friends are met, God makes up a third." But it is no less true, that where one faithful spirit is, there God makes up a second. One God can more than supply a thousand friends.

SECT. 6.

The practice of voluntary travel.

THY banishment bereaves thee of the comfort of thy wonted companions:—Would not a voluntary travel do as much? Dost thou not see thousands, that do willingly, for many years, change their country for foreign regions; taking long farewells of their dear friends and comrades: some, out of curiosity; some, out of a thirst after knowledge; some, out of a covetous desire of gain? What difference is there, betwixt thee and them; but that their exile is voluntary, thy travel constrained?

And who are then these, whom thou art so sorry to forego? Dost thou not remember what Crates, the Philosopher, said to a young man, that was beset with parasitical friends? "Young man," said he, "I pity thy solitude." Perhaps, thou mayest be more alone in such society, than in the wilderness: such conversation is better lost, than continued. If thou canst but get to be well acquainted with thyself, thou shalt be sorry that thou wert no sooner solitary.

SECT. 7.

All are pilgrims.

THOU art out of thy country:—Who is not so? We are all *Pilgrims* together with thee; 1 Pet. ii. 11. Heb. xi. 13. *While we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord;* 2 Cor. v. 6. Miserable are we, if our true home be not above. That is the *better country* which we seek, *even a heavenly;* Heb. xi. 16: and thither thou mayest equally direct thy course, in whatsoever region. This centre of earth is equidistant from the glorious circumference of heaven: if we may once meet there, what need we make such difference in the way.

CHAP. XI.

COMFORTS AGAINST THE LOSS OF OUR SENSES OF SIGHT AND HEARING.

SECT. 1.

The two inward lights, of Reason and Faith.

THOU hast lost thine eyes: a loss, which all the world is uncapable to repair. Thou art hereby condemned to a perpetual darkness: for, *The light of the body is the eye; and if the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!* Matt. vi. 22, 23:—

Couldst thou have foreseen this evil, thou hadst anticipated this loss, by weeping out those eyes for grief, which thou must forego.

There are but two ways, by which any outward comfort can have access to thy soul; the eye, and the ear: one of them is now foreclosed for ever.

Yet know, my son, thou hast two other inward eyes, that can abundantly supply the want of these of thy body; the eye of Reason, and the eye of Faith: the one, as a Man; the other, as a Christian.

Answerable whereunto, there is a double light apprehended by them; rational, and divine: Solomon tells thee of the one; *The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord, searching all the inward parts of the belly;* Prov. xx. 27: the Beloved Disciple tells thee of the other; *God is light: and we walk in the light, as he is in the light;* 1 John i. 5, 7.

Now these two lights are no less above that outward and visible light whereof thou art bereaved, than that light is above darkness. If, therefore, by the eye of Reason thou shalt attain to the clear sight of intelligible things, and by the eye of Faith to the sight of things supernatural and divine, the improvement of these better eyes shall make a large amends for the lack of thy bodily sight.

SECT. 2.

The supply of better eyes.

THY sight is lost:—Let me tell thee what Anthony, the Hermit, whom Ruffinus doubts not to style Blessed *, said to learned, though blind, Didymus of Alexandria: "Let it not trouble thee, O Didymus, that thou art bereft of carnal eyes; for thou lackest only those eyes, which mice, and flies, and lizards have: but rejoice, that thou hast those eyes, which the angels have; whereby they see

* Ruffinus Hist. l. ii. c. 7.

God; and by which thou art enlightened with a great measure of knowledge." Make this good of thyself; and thou shalt not be too much discomforted with the absence of thy bodily eyes.

SECT. 3.

The better object of our inward sight.

THINE eyes are lost:—The chief comfort of thy life is gone with them: *The light is sweet*, saith Solomon; *and a pleasant thing it is, for the eyes to behold the sun;* Eccl. xi. 7. Hath not God done this purposely, that he might set thee off from all earthly objects, that thou mightest so much the more intentively fix thyself upon him; and seek after those spiritual comforts, which are to be found in a better light?

Behold, the sun is the most glorious thing, that the bodily eyes can possibly see: thy spiritual eyes may see him, that made that goodly and glorious creature, and therefore must needs be infinitely more glorious than what he made. If thou canst now see him the more, how hast thou but gained by thy loss!

SECT. 4.

The ill offices done by the eyes.

THOU art become blind:—Certainly, it is a sore affliction. The men of Jabesh-Gilead offered to comply with the tyrant of the Ammonites, so far as to serve him; but, when he required the loss of their right eyes, as a condition of their peace, they will rather hazard their lives in an unequal war; 1 Sam. xi. 1—3. as if servitude and death were a less mischief, than one eye's loss.

How much more of both! for, though one eye be but *testis singularis;* yet the evidence of that is as true as that of both; yea, in some cases more: for, when we would take a perfect aim, we shut one eye, as rather a hindrance to an accurate information. Yet, for ordinary use, so do we esteem each of these lights, that there is no wise man but would rather lose a limb than an eye.

Although I could tell thee of a certain man, not less religious than witty, who, when his friends bewailed the loss of one of his eyes, asked them, whether they wept for the eye which he had lost, or the eye which remained. "Weep rather," said he, "for the enemy which stays behind, than for the enemy that is gone*."

Lo, this man looked upon his eyes, with eyes different from other men's: he saw them as enemies, which others see as officious servants, as good friends, as dear favourites. Indeed, they

* Brom. V. Sensus.

are any or all of these, according as they are used: good servants, if they go faithfully on the errands we send them, and return us true intelligence: good friends, if they advise and invite us to holy thoughts: enemies, if they suggest and allure us to evil.

If thine eyes have been employed in these evil offices to thy soul, God hath done that for thee, which he hath, in a figurative sense enjoined thee, to do to thyself. *If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee; for it is better for thee, that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell;* Matt. v. 29.

SECT. 5.

Freedom from temptations by the eyes, and from many sorrows.

Thou hast lost thine eyes; and, together with them, much earthly contentment:—But, withal, thou art hereby freed of many temptations. Those eyes were the inlets of sin; yea, not only the mere passages by which it entered, but busy agents in the admission of it; the very panders of lust for the debauching of the soul. How many thousands are there, who, on their death-beds, upon the sad recalling of their guilty thoughts, have wished they had been born blind! So as, if now thou hast less joy, thou shalt sin less: neither shall any vain objects call away thy thoughts, from the serious and sad meditation of spiritual things.

Before, it was no otherwise with thee, than the Prophet Jeremiah reports it to have been with the Jews, that *death is come up by the windows;* Jer. ix. 21. So it was with our great grandmother Eve: *She saw the tree was pleasant to the eyes; and,* thereupon, *took of the fruit;* Gen. iii. 6. So it hath been, ever since, with all the fruit of her womb, both in the old and latter world; *The sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair, and they took them wives of all which they chose;* Gen. vi. 2. Insomuch as not filthy lusts only, but even adulteries take up their lodgings in the eye: there the blessed Apostle finds them: *Having eyes,* saith he, *full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin;* 2 Pet. ii. 14.

While therefore thy *heart walked after thine eyes,* as Job speaks, Job xxxi. 7. it could do no other; but *carry thee down to the chambers of death;* Prov. vii. 27. Thou art now delivered from that danger of so deadly a misguidance.

Hath not the loss of thine eyes, withal, freed thee of a world of sorrows? The old word is, "What the eye views not, the heart rues not." Hadst thou but seen what others are forced to behold, those fearful conflagrations, those piles of murdered carcases, those streams of Christian blood, those savage violences, those merciless rapines, those sacrilegious outrages, thy heart could not choose but bleed within thee: now, thou art affected with them only aloof off; as receiving them by the perfect intelligence of thine ear, from the unfeeling relation of others.

SECT. 6.

The cheerfulness of some blind men.

THINE eyes are lost:—What need thy heart to go with them? I have known a blind man more cheerful than I could be with both mine eyes.

Old Isaac was dark-sighted when he gave the blessing, contrary to his own intentions, to his son Jacob: yet it seems he lived forty years after; and could be pleased then, to have good cheer made him with wine and venison; Gen. xxvii. 25.

Our life doth not lie in our eyes: *The spirit of man* is that, which *upholds his infirmities;* Prov. xviii. 14. Labour to raise that to a cheerful disposition; even in thy bodily darkness, there shall be light and joy to thy soul; Esth. viii. 16.

SECT. 7.

The supply which God gives in other faculties.

HATH God taken away thine eyes?—But hath he not given thee an abundant supply in other faculties? Are not thine inward senses the more quick? thy memory stronger; thy phantasy more active; thy understanding more apprehensive?

The wonders, that we have heard and read of blind men's memories, were not easy to believe, if it were not obvious to conceive, that the removal of all distractions gives them an opportunity both of a careful reposition of all desired objects, and of a sure fixedness of them where they are laid. Hence, have we seen it come to pass, that some blind men have attained to those perfections, which their eyes could never have feoffed them in.

It is very memorable, that our Ecclesiastical Story reports * of Didymus of Alexandria; who, being blind from his infancy, through his prayers and diligent endeavours reached unto such a high pitch of knowledge in logic, geometry, arithmetic, astronomy, as was admired by the learned Masters of those Arts; and, for his rare insight into Divinity, was, by great Athanasius, approved to be the Doctor of the Chair in that famous Church.

What need we doubt of this truth, when our own times have so clearly seconded it? having yielded divers worthy Divines, God's Seers, bereaved of bodily eyes.

Amongst the rest, there was one † in my time, very eminent in the University of Cambridge, whom I had occasion to dispute with for his Degrees, of great skill both in Tongues and Arts, and of singular acuteness of judgment. It is somewhat strange, that Suidas ‡

* Ruffin. Eccl. Hist. l. ii. c. 7. † Mr. Fisher, in Trinity College in Cambridge. ‡ Suidas ex Aristophane.

reports of Neoclides; that, being a blind man, he could steal more cunningly than any that had use of eyes. Sure, I may say boldly of our Fisher, that he was more dexterous in picking the locks of difficult authors, and fetching forth the treasures of their hidden senses, than those, that had the sharpest eyes about him: insomuch as it was noted those were singular proficients, which employed themselves in reading to him. If they read books to him, he read lectures the while to them; and still taught more than he learned.

As for the other outward senses, they are commonly more exquisite in the blind. We read of some, who have been of so accurate a touch, that, by their very feeling, they could distinguish betwixt black and white. And, for the ear, as our Philosophers * observe, that sounds are sweeter to the blind than to the sighted; so also, that they are more curiously judged of by them: the virtue of both those senses being now contracted into one.

But the most perfect recompence of these bodily eyes is, in the exaltation of our spiritual; so much more enlightened towards the beatifical vision of God, as they apprehend more darkness in all earthly objects. Certainly, thou shalt not miss these material eyes, if thou mayest find thy soul thus happily enlightened.

SECT. 8.

The benefits of the eyes, which once we had.

THINE eyes are lost:—It is a blessing, that once thou hadst them. Hadst thou been born blind, what a stranger hadst thou, in all likelihood, been to God and the world! Hadst thou not once seen the face of this heaven, and this earth, and this sea, what expressions could have made thee sufficiently apprehensive of the wonderful works of thy Creator? what discourse could have made thee to understand what light is? what the sun, the fountain of it; what the heavens, the glorious region of it; and what the moon and stars, illuminated by it? How couldst thou have had thy thoughts raised so high, as to give glory to that great God, whose infinite power hath wrought all these marvellous things?

No doubt, God hath his own ways of mercy, even for those that are born dark; not requiring what he hath not given; graciously supplying, by his Spirit, in the vessel of his election, what is wanting in the outward man: so as even those, that could never see the face of the world, shall see the face of the God that made it. But, in an ordinary course of proceeding, those, which have been blind from their birth, must needs want those helps of knowing and glorifying God in his mighty works, which lie open to the seeing.

These once filled thine eyes; and stay with thee still, after thine

* The Lord Verulam.—Fr. Bacon, in his Natural History.

eyes have forsaken thee. What shouldst thou do, but walk on, in the strength of those fixed thoughts; and be always adoring the Majesty of that God, whom that sight hath represented unto thee so glorious; and, in an humble submission to his good pleasure, strive against all the discomforts of thy sufferings?

Our Story tells us * of a valiant soldier, answerable to the name he bore, Polyzelus; who, after his eyes were struck out in the battle, covering his face with his target, fought still; laying about him as vehemently, as if he had seen whom to smite. So do thou, my son, with no less courage: let not the loss of thine eyes hinder thee from a cheerful resistance of those spiritual enemies, which labour to draw thee into an impatient murmuring against the hand of thy God: wait humbly upon that God who hath better eyes in store for thee, than those that thou hast lost.

SECT. 9.

The supply of one sense by another.

THOU hast lost thy hearing:—It is not easy to determine whether loss is the greater; of the eye, or of the ear: both are grievous.

Now all the world is to thee as dumb, since thou art deaf to it. How small a matter hath made thee a mere cypher amongst men!

These two are the senses of instruction: there is no other way for intelligence to be conveyed to the soul, whether in secular or in spiritual affairs: the eye is the window, the ear is the door, by which all knowledge enters: in matters of observation, by the eye; in matter of faith, by the ear; Rom. x. 17.

Had it pleased God to shut up both these senses from thy birth, thy estate had been utterly disconsolate; neither had there been any possible access for comfort to thy soul: and if he had so done to thee in thy riper age, there had been no way for thee but to live on thy former store: But, now that he hath vouchsafed to leave thee one passage open, it behoves thee to supply the one sense by the other; and to let in those helps by the window, which are denied entrance at the door.

And, since that Infinite Goodness hath been pleased to lend thee thine ear so long, as till thou hast laid the sure grounds of faith in thy heart; now thou mayest work upon them in this silent opportunity with heavenly meditations; and raise them up to no less height, than thou mightest have done, by the help of the quickest ear.

It is well for thee, that, in the fulness of thy senses, thou wert careful to improve thy bosom, as a magazine of heavenly thoughts; providing, with the wise Patriarch, for the seven years of dearth: otherwise, now that the passages are thus blocked up, thou couldst not but have been in danger of affamishing. Thou hast now abun-

* Suidas. V. Hippias.

dant leisure to recal and ruminate upon those holy counsels, which thy better times laid up in thy heart; and, to thy happy advantage, findest the difference, betwixt a wise providence and a careless neglect.

SECT. 10.

The better condition of the inward ear.

THINE outward hearing is gone:—But thou hast an inward and better ear, whereby thou hearest the secret motions of God's Spirit, which shall never be lost.

How many thousands, whom thou enviest, are in a worse condition! They have an outward and bodily ear, whereby they hear the voice of men; but they want that spiritual ear, which perceives the least whisperings of the Holy Ghost. Ears they have, but not hearing ears; for fashion, more than use. Wise Solomon makes and observes the distinction: *The hearing ear, and the seeing eye, the Lord hath made even both of them;* Prov. xx. 12. And a greater than Solomon can say of his formal auditors, *Hearing they hear not;* Matt. xiii. 13. If thou have an ear for God, though deaf to men; how much happier art thou than those millions of men, that have an ear for men, and are deaf to God!

SECT. 11.

The grief that arises from hearing evil.

THOU hast lost thy hearing:—And therewith no small deal of sorrow. How would it grieve thy soul to hear those woeful ejaculations, those pitiful complaints, those hideous blasphemies, those mad paradoxes, those hellish heresies, wherewith thine ear would have been wounded, if it had not been barred against their entrance! It is thy just grief, that thou missest of the hearing of many good words: it is thy happiness, that thou art freed from the hearing of many evil. It is an even lay, betwixt the benefit of hearing good, and the torment of hearing evil.

CHAP. XII.

COMFORTS AGAINST BARRENNESS.

SECT. 1.

The blessing of fruitfulness seasoned with sorrows.

THOU complainest of dry loins and a barren womb:—So did a better man before thee; even the Father of the Faithful: *What wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless?* Gen. xv. 2. So did the wife of

faithful Israel: *Give me children, or else I die*; Gen. xxx. 1. So desirous hath nature been, even in the holiest, to propagate itself; and so impatient of a denial. *Lo, children and the fruit of the womb are an heritage and gift, that cometh from the Lord*; Psalm cxxvii. 3. *Happy is he, that hath his quiver full of such shafts*; v. 5. It is the blessing, that David grudged to wicked ones; *They have children at their desire*; Ps. xvii. 14. It was the curse, which God inflicted upon the family of Abimelech, King of Gerar, that he *closed up all the wombs in his house, for Sarah's sake*; Gen. xx. 17, 18: and the judgment threatened to Ephraim, is *a miscarrying womb, and dry breasts*; Hos. ix. 14: and Jeconiah's sad doom is, *Write this man childless*; Jer. xxii. 30. As, on the contrary, it is a special favour of God, that *the barren hath borne seven*; 1 Sam. ii. 5: and it is noted by the Psalmist, as a wonder of God's mercy, that *he maketh the barren woman to keep house, and to be a joyful mother of children*; Ps. cxiii. 9.

It is pity he was ever born, that holds not children a blessing: yet not simple and absolute, but according as it may prove.

She hath a double favour from God, that is *a joyful mother of children*: many a one breeds her sorrow, breeds her death.

There is scarce any other blessing from God seasoned with so much acrimony, both of misery and danger. Do but lay together the sick fits of breeding, the painful throws of travail, the weary attendances of nursing, the anxious cares of education, the fears and doubts of misguidance, the perpetual solicitude for their provision, the heart-breaking grief for their miscarriage; and tell me, whether thy bemoaned sterility have not more ease, less sorrow.

SECT. 2.

The pains of child-bearing.

It is thy sorrow then, that thou art not fruitful:—Consider, that thou art herein freed from a greater sorrow: *In sorrow, shalt thou bring forth children*; Gen. iii. 16.

Do but think upon the shrieks and torments, that thou hast seen and heard in the painful travails of thy neighbours. One, thou hast seen wearying the days and nights, in restless pangs; and calling for death, in a despair of delivery: another, after the unprofitable labours of midwives, forced to have her bowels ransacked by the hand of another sex. One hath her dead burthen torn from her by piece-meal: another is delivered of her life and birth together. One languisheth to death, after the hand of an unskilful midwife: another is weary of her life, through the soreness of her breasts. All these sorrows thou hast escaped by this one: in these regards, how many whom thou enviest, have thought thee happier than themselves!

SECT. 3.

The misery of ill-disposed and undutiful children.

THOU art afflicted, that thou art not a mother:—Many a one is so, that wishes she had been barren. If either the child prove deformed and mis-shapen; or, upon further growth, unnatural and wicked; what a corrosive is this to her, that bore him!

Rebekah thought it long to be, after her marriage, twenty years childless: her holy husband, at sixty years of age, prays to God for issue by her; Gen. xxv. 20, 21. His devotion, as the Jewish Doctors say, carried him to mount Moriah, for this purpose; that in the same place, where his life was miraculously preserved from the knife of his father, it might, by the like miracle, be renewed in his posterity: God hears him: Rebekah conceives: but, when she felt that early combat of her struggling twins in her womb, she can say, *If it be so, why am I thus?* v. 22. And, when she saw a child come forth all clad in hair, v. 25. and after saw his conditions no less rough than his hide, ch. xxvii. 41. do we not think she wished that part of her burden unborn?

Certainly, children are, according to their proof, either blessings or crosses. Hast thou a child well disposed, well governed? *A wise son maketh a glad father.* Hast thou a child disorderly and debauched? *A foolish son is the heaviness of his mother; and the calamity of his father;* Prov. x. 1. xv. 20. xix. 13. Hast thou a son, that is unruly, stubborn, unnatural? as commonly the cions overrule the stock: *He, that wasteth his father, and chaseth away his mother, is a son, that causeth shame, and bringeth reproach;* ch. xix. 26. And, if such a son should live and die impenitent, what can be answerable to the discomfort of that parent, who shall think that a piece of himself is in hell?

SECT. 4.

The cares of parents for their children.

THOU hast no children:—As thou hast less joy, so thou hast less trouble.

It is a world of work and thoughts, that belong to these living possessions. Artemidorus observes, that to dream of children, imports cares to follow *. Surely, as they are our greatest cares, so they bring many lesser cares with them. Before, thou hadst but one mouth to feed; now, many. And upon whom doth this charge lie, but upon the parent? Not nature only, but religion casts it upon him: for, *If any provide not for his own, especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel;*

* Artemidor. de Insomniis. l. i. c. 16.

1 Tim. v. 8. Dost thou not see, that many suckers, growing up from the root of the tree, draw away the sap from the stock? and many rivulets, let out from the main channel, leave the stream shallow? So it must be, with thee and thine.

But this expence is not more necessary, than comfortable. I remember a great man coming to my house at Waltham, and seeing all my children standing in the order of their age and stature, said, "These are they, that make rich men poor:" but he straight received this answer; "Nay, my Lord, these are they, that make a poor man rich: for there is not one of these, whom we would part with for all your wealth."

Indeed, wherefore do we receive, but to distribute? and what are we, but the farmers of those, we leave behind us? And, if we do freely lay out our substance beforehand for their good, so much of our rent is happily cleared.

It is easy to observe, that none are so gripple and hard fisted, as the childless: whereas those, who, for the maintenance of large families, are inured to frequent disbursements, find such experience of Divine Providence in the faithful managing of their affairs, as that they lay out with more cheerfulness than they receive.

Wherein their care must be abated, when God takes it off from them to himself; and, if they be not wanting to themselves, their faith gives them ease, in casting their burden upon him, who hath both more power and more right to it, since our children are more his than our own. He, that feedeth the *young ravens*, (Psalm cxlvii. 9.) can he fail the best of his creatures?

Worthy Master Greenham tells us of a Gentlewoman, who, coming into the cottage of a poor neighbour, and seeing it furnished with store of children, could say, "Here are the mouths, but where is the meat?" but, not long after, she was paid in her own coin: for the poor woman, coming to her after the burial of her last and now only child, inverted the question upon her, "Here is the meat, but where are the mouths?"

Surely, the great Housekeeper of the World, whose charge we are, will never leave any of his menials without the bread of sufficiency: and who are so fit to be his purveyors, as the parents for their own brood? Nature hath taught the very birds, to pick out the best of the grains for their young? Nature sends that moisture out of the root, which gives life to the branches and blossoms.

Sometimes, it meets with a kind retaliation: some stork-like disposition repays the loving offices done by the parents, in a dutiful retribution to their age or necessity.

But, how often have we seen the contrary! Here, an unsatisfiable importunity of drawing from the parent that maintenance, which is but necessary for his own subsistence: so, we have seen a young bat, hanging on the teat of her dam for milk, even when she is dying: so, we have seen some insatiable lambs, forcing the udder of their dams, when they have been as big as the ewe that yeaned them. There, an undutiful and unnatural neglect; whe-

ther in not owning the meanness of those, that begot them; or in not supporting the weakness of their decayed estate, by due maintenance. Ingratitude is odious in any man; but in a child, monstrous.

SECT. 5.

The great grief in the loss of children.

It is thy grief, that thou never hadst a child:—Believe him, that hath tried it, there is not so much comfort in the having of children, as there is sorrow in parting with them: especially, when they are come to their proof; when their parts and disposition have raised our hopes of them, and doubled our affection towards them.

And as, according to the French Proverb, "He, that hath not, cannot lose;" so, contrarily, he, that hath, must lose. Our meeting is not more certain, than our parting: either we must leave them, and so their grief for us must double ours; or they must leave us, and so our grief for them must be no less than our love was of them.

If, then, thou wilt be truly wise, set thy heart upon that only Absolute Good, which is not capable of losing. Divided affections must needs abate of their force. Now, since there are no objects of darkness which might distract thy love, be sure to place it wholly upon that Infinite Goodness, which shall entertain it with mercy, and reward it with blessedness.

If Elkanah therefore could say to his barren wife Hannah, *Why weepest thou? and why is thy heart heavy? am not I better to thee than ten sons?* 1 Sam. i. 8: how much more comfortably mayest thou hear the Father of Mercies say to thy soul, "Why is thy heart heavy? am not I better to thee than ten thousand sons?"

CHAP. XIII.

COMFORTS AGAINST WANT OF SLEEP.

SECT. 1.

The misery of the want of rest; with the best remedy.

Thou art afflicted with want of sleep:—A complaint incident to distempered bodies and thoughtful minds. Oh, how wearisome a thing it is, to spend the long night, in tossing up and down in a restless bed, in the chase of sleep; which, the more eagerly it is followed, flies so much the farther from us! Couldst thou obtain of

thyself to forbear the desire of it, perhaps it would come alone: now that thou suest for it, like to some froward piece, it is coy and overly; and punishes thee with thy longing. Lo, he, that could command a hundred and seven and twenty provinces, yet could not command rest: *On that night his sleep departed from him;* Esth. vi. 1: neither could he either forced or entreated to his bed. And the great Babylonian Monarch, though he laid some hand on sleep, yet he could not hold it; for *his sleep brake from him;* Dan. ii. 1. And, for great and wise Solomon, it would not so much as come within his view: *Neither night nor day seeth he sleep with his eyes;* Eccl. viii. 16. Surely, as there is no earthly thing more comfortable to nature than bodily rest (Jer. xxxi. 26.); so, there is nothing, whose loss is more grievous and disheartening. If the senses be not sometimes, in meet vicissitudes, tied up; how can they chuse, but run themselves out of breath, and weary and spend themselves to nothing? If the body be not refreshed, with a moderate interchange of repose; how can it but languish, in all the parts of it? and, as commonly the soul follows the temper of the body, how can that but find a sensible discomposure and debilitation, in all her faculties and operations? Do we not see the savagest creatures tamed with want of rest? Do we not find this rack alone to have been torture enough, to fetch from poor souls a confessional discovery of those acts they never did? Do we not find reveries and frenzies the ordinary attendants of sleeplessness? Herein, therefore, thy tongue hath just cause to complain of thine eyes.

For Remedy, instead of closing thy lids to wait for sleep; lift up thy stiff eyes to him, that *giveth his beloved rest;* Ps. cxxvii. 2. Whatever be the means, he it is, that *holdeth* thine *eyes waking;* Ps. lxxvii. 4. He, that made thine eyes, keeps off sleep from thy body, for the good of thy soul: let not thine eyes wake, without thy heart. The Spouse of Christ can say, *I sleep, but my heart waketh;* Cant. v. 2: how much more should she say, "Mine eyes wake, and my heart waketh also!" When thou canst not see sleep with thine eyes, labour to see Him, that is invisible: one glimpse of that sight is more worth, than all the sleep that thine eyes can be capable of. Give thyself up into his hands, to be disposed of at his will. What is this sweet acquiescence, but the rest of the soul? which if thou canst find in thyself, thou shalt quietly digest the want of thy bodily sleep.

SECT. 2.

The favour of freedom from pain.

THOU wantest sleep:—Take heed thou do not aggravate thine affliction. It is only an evil of loss; no evil of sense: a mere lack of what thou wishest; not a pain of what thou feelest. Alas, how

many, besides want of rest, are tortured with intolerable torments in all the parts of their body; who would think themselves happy, if they might be put into thy condition! might they but have ease, how gladly would they forbear rest! Be not, therefore, so much troubled, that it is no better with thee; but rather be thankful, that it is no worse.

SECT. 3.

The favour of health without sleep.

THOU lackest sleep:—A thing, that we desire not so much for its own sake, as in a way to health. What if God be pleased so to dispose of thee, as to give thee health without it?

So he hath done to some. It is a small matter, that Goulart * reports out of Gasper Wolfius, of a woman in Padua, that continued fifteen days and nights without sleep. That is very memorable, which Seneca tells us of great Mecænas; that, in three years, he slept not *ne horæ momento;* "so much as the space of an hour:" which, however, Lipsius thinks good to mitigate with a favourable construction, as conceiving an impossibility of an absolute sleeplessness; yet if we shall compare it with other instances of the same kind, we shall find no reason to scruple the utmost rigour of that relation. That a frantic man, of whom Fernelius writes †, should continue a year and two months without any sleep at all, is no wonder, in comparison of that, which learned Heurnius tells us ‡, upon good assurance given him, when he was a student in Padua; that Nizolius, the famous Ciceronian, lived ten whole years without sleep. And, even in our time and climate, I have been informed by credible testimony, that Monsieur L'Angles, a French Physician at London, lived no fewer years altogether sleepless. But that exceeds all example, which Monsieur Goulart reports § out of an author of good reputation, of a certain Gentlewoman, who, for thirty-five years, remained without any sleep, and found no inconvenience or distemper thereby; as was witnessed by her husband and servants.

Lo, the hand of God is not shortened. He, who, in our time, miraculously protracted the life of the Maid of Meures so many years without meat, hath sustained the lives of these fore-named persons thus long without sleep, that it might appear, *Man lives not by meat* or sleep *only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God*; Matt. iv. 4. Deut. viii. 3. If he should please to bless thee with a sleepless health, the favour is far greater, than if he allowed thee to snort out thy time, in a dull unprofitable rest.

* Histoires Memorables: c. Veiles. † Patholog. l. v. c. 2. ‡ Lib. de morbis capitis: c. 16. § Goulart: ibidem.

SECT. 4.

Sleep but a symptom of mortality.

THOU wantest sleep:—*Behold, he, that keepeth Israel, doth neither slumber nor sleep;* and those blessed spirits, that do continually see the face of God, never sleep.

Sleep is but a symptom of frail mortality, whereof the less we do or can partake, we come so much the nearer to those spiritual natures, whose perfection makes them uncapable of sleep.

Hereupon it was, that those retired Christians in the primitive times, which affected to come nearest to an angelical life, wilfully repelled sleep; neither would ever admit it, till it necessarily forced itself upon them *.

Lo, then, thou sufferest no more, out of the distemper of humours or unnatural obstractions, than better men have willingly drawn upon themselves, out of holy resolutions. It is but our construction, that makes those things tedious to us, which have been well taken by others.

SECT. 5.

No use of sleep whither we are going.

THOU wantest sleep:—Have patience, my son, for a while. Thou art going, where there shall be no need, no use of sleep: and, in the mean time, thy better part would not, cannot rest. Though the gates be shut, that it cannot shew itself abroad, it is ever and ever will be active. As for this earthly piece, it shall ere long sleep its fill, where no noise can wake it, till the *voice of the archangel and the trumpet of God* shall call it up, in the morning of the Resurrection; 1 Thess. iv. 16.

CHAP. XIV

COMFORTS AGAINST THE INCONVENIENCES OF OLD AGE.

SECT. 1.

The illimitation of age; and the miseries that attend it.

OLD age is that, which we all desire to aspire unto; and when we have attained, are as ready to complain of, as our greatest misery:

* Sozomen. l. vi. c. 39.

verifying, in part, that old observation, That wedlock and age are things, which we desire and repent of.

Is this our ingratitude, or inconstancy, that we are weary of what we wished?

Perhaps, this accusation may not be universal. There is much difference in constitutions, and much latitude in old age. Infancy and youth have their limits: age admits of no certain determination.

At seventy years, David was old, and stricken in years; and they *covered him with clothes, but he gat no heat*; 1 Kings i. 1: whereas Caleb can profess, *Now, lo, I am fourscore and five years old: as yet I am as strong this day, as I was in the day that Moses sent me to spy out the land: as my strength was then, even so is my strength now, for war, both to go out and come in*; Josh. xiv. 10, 11. And, beyond him, *Moses was a hundred and twenty years old*, when *his eye was not dim, nor his natural strength abated*; Deut. xxxiv. 7. Methuselah was but old, when he was nine hundred sixty five; Gen. v. 27.

But as for the generality of mankind, the same Moses, who lived to see a hundred and twenty years, hath set man's ordinary period at half his own term: *The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and, if by reason of strength, they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow*; Ps. xc. 10. Lo, fourscore years alone are load enough for the strength, much more for the weakness, of age: but, when labour and sorrow are added to the weight, how can we but double under the burthen?

He was both old and wise, that said *, out of experience, that our last days are the dregs of our life: the clearer part is gone, and all drawn out; the lees sink down to the bottom. Who can express the miserable inconveniences, that attend old age? wherein our cares must needs be multiplied, according to the manifold occasions of our affairs: for the world is a net, wherein the more we stir, the more we are entangled. And, for our bodily grievances, what varieties do we here meet withal! What aches of the bones! what belking of the joints! what convulsions of sinews! what torments of the bowels, stone, cholic, strangury! what distillations of rheum! what hollow coughs! what weaknesses of retention, expulsion, digestion! what decay of senses! as age is no other than the common sewer, into which all diseases of our life are wont to empty themselves. Well, therefore, might Sarah say, *After I am waxed old, shall I have pleasure?* Gen. xviii. 12. And good Barzillai justly excuses himself, for not accepting the gracious invitation of David: *I am this day fourscore years old, and can I discern between good and evil? Can thy servant taste what I eat, or what I drink? Can I hear any more the voice of singing-men and singing-women? Wherefore then should thy servant be yet a burden unto my lord the king?* 2 Sam. xix. 35.

Lo, these are they, which the Preacher calls the *evil days*, and

* Sen. Ep. 58.

the years wherein a man shall say, I have no pleasure; wherein *the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars are darkened, and the clouds return after the rain: when the keepers of the house shall tremble; and the strong men shall bow themselves; and the grinders cease, because they are few; and those, that look out of the windows, be darkened;* Eccl. xii. 1, 2, 3. Shortly, what is our old age, but the winter of our life? How can we then expect any other, than gloomy weather, chilling frosts, storms and tempests?

SECT. 2.

Old age a blessing.

But, while we do thus querulously aggravate the incommodities of age, we must beware lest we derogate from the bounty of our Maker, and disparage those blessings which he accounts precious: amongst which, old age is none of the meanest.

Had he not put that value upon it, would he have honoured it with his own style, calling himself, *The Ancient of Days?* Dan. vii. 9, 13, 22. Would he else have set out this mercy as a reward of obedience to himself; *I will fulfil the number of thy days?* Exod. xxiii. 26. and of obedience to our parents, *To live long in the land?* Exod. xx. 12. Would he have promised it as a marvellous favour to restored Jerusalem, now become a City of Truth, that *there shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, and every man with his staff in his hand for very age?* Zech. viii. 4. Would he else have denounced it as a judgment to over-indulgent Eli, *There shall not be an old man in thy house for ever?* 1 Sam. ii. 32. Far be it from us, to despise that, which God doth honour; and to turn his blessing into a curse.

Yea, the same God, who knows best the price of his own favours, as he makes no small estimation of age himself; so he hath thought fit to call for a high respect to be given to it, out of a holy awe to himself: *Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man, and fear thy God: I am the Lord;* Lev. xix. 32. Hence it is, that he hath pleased to put together the *ancient* and the *honourable;* Isa. ix. 15: and hath told us, that a *hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in a way of righteousness;* Prov. xvi. 31. xx. 29: and, lastly, makes it an argument of the deplored estate of Jerusalem, that they *favoured not the elders;* Lam. iv. 16.

As, therefore, we too sensibly feel what to complain of; so we well know what privileges we may challenge as due to our age: even such, as nature itself hath taught those heathens, which have been in the next degree to savage. If pride and skill have made the Athenians uncivil, yet a young Lacedemonian will rise up, and yield his place in the theatre to neglected age.

SECT. 3.

The advantages of old-age: (1.) *Fearlessness:*—(2.) *Freedom from Passions:*—(3.) *Experimental Knowledge:*—(4.) *Near Approach to our end.*

It is not a little injurious, so to fasten our eyes upon the discommodities of any condition, as not to take in the Advantages that belong to it; which carefully laid together, may perhaps sway the balance to an equal poise. Let it be true, that old age is oppressed with many bodily griefs; but what if it yield other immunities, which may keep the scales even?

(1.) Whereof it is not the least, that it gives us firm Resolution and bold Security, against dangers and death itself: for the old man knows how little of his clew is left in the winding; and, therefore, when just occasion is offered, sticks not so much upon so inconsiderable a remainder.

Old age and orbity, as Cesellius professed, were those two things, that emboldened him: and, when Castritius refused to deliver the hostages of Placentia to Carbo the consul, and was threatened with many swords, he answered those menaces with his many years.

And, that we may not disdain homebred instances, and may see that brave spirits may lodge in cottages, in my time a plain villager in the rude Peak, when thieves, taking advantage of the absence of his family, breaking into his solitary dwelling, and, finding him sitting alone by his fire side, fell violently upon him; and one of them, setting his dagger to his heart, swore that he would presently kill him, if he did not instantly deliver to them that money, which they knew he had lately received; the old man looks boldly in the face of that stout villain, and, with an undaunted courage, returns him this answer in his Peakish dialect: "Nay, even put fro thee, son: I have lived long enough; but I tell thee, unless thou mend thy manners, thou wilt never live to see half my days: put fro thee, if thou wilt."

What young man would have been so easily induced to part with his life; and have been so ready to give entertainment to an unexpected death? Surely, the hope, and love, of life commonly softens the spirits of vigorous youth; and dissuades it from those enterprises, which are attended with manifest peril: whereas extreme age teacheth us to contemn dangers.

(2.) Yet a greater privilege of age is, a Freedom from those impetuous Passions, wherewith youth is commonly overswayed: for, together with our natural heat, is also abated the heat of our inordinate lusts; so as now our weaker appetite may easily be subdued to reason. The temperate old man in the Story, when one shewed him a beautiful face, could answer, "I have long since left

to be eye-sick:" and that other could say of pleasure, "I have gladly withdrawn myself from the service of that imperious mistress."

What an unreasonable vassalage our youthful lusts subject us unto, we need no other instance than in the strongest and wisest man.

How was the strongest man, Samson, effeminated by his impotent passion; and weakened in his intellectuals so far, as wilfully to betray his own life to a mercenary harlot; and to endure to hear her say, *Tell me wherewith thou mayest be bound to do thee hurt!* Judges xvi. 6. How easily might he have answered thee, O Delilah, "Even with these cords of brutish sensuality, wherewith thou hast already bound me to the loss of my liberty, mine eyes, my life!"

How was the wisest man, Solomon, besotted with his strange wives, so as to be drawn away to the worship of strange Gods!

And how may the fir-trees howl, when the cedars fall! Who can hope to be free from being transported with irregular affections, when we see such great precedents of frailty before our eyes?

From the danger of these miserable miscarriages our age happily secures us; putting us into that quiet harbour, whence we may see young men perilously tossed with those tempests of unruly passions, from which our cooler age hath freed us.

(3.) Add hereunto the benefit of Experimental Knowledge, wherewith age is wont to enrich us; every dram whereof is worth many pounds of the best youthly contentments: in comparison whereof, the speculative knowledge is weak and imperfect. This may come good-cheap; perhaps, cost us nothing: that, commonly, we pay dear for; and, therefore, is justly esteemed the more precious. If experience be the mistress of fools, I am sure it is the mother of wisdom.

Neither can it be, except we be too much wanting to ourselves, but the long observation of such variety of actions and events as meet with us in the whole course of our life, must needs leave with us such sure rules of judgment, as may be unfailing directions for ourselves and others. In vain shall this be expected from our younger years; which the wise Philosopher excludes from being meet auditors, much less judges of true morality. In regard whereof, well might the old man say, "Ye, young men, think us old men fools; but we, old men, know you young men to be fools."

Certainly, what value soever ignorance may put upon it, this fruit of age is such, as that the earth hath nothing equally precious. It was a profane word, and fit for the mouth of a heathen poet, That prudence is above destiny: but, surely, a Christian may modestly and justly say, That, next to Divine Providence, human prudence may challenge the supreme place in the administration of these earthly affairs; and that age may claim the greatest interest in that prudence. Young Elihu could say, *Multitude of years should*

teach wisdom; Job xxxii. 7: and the Wise Man, "Oh, how comely a thing is judgment, for grey hairs; and, for ancient men, to know counsel! Oh, how comely is the wisdom of old men; and understanding and counsel to men of honour!" Ecclus. xxv. 4, 5. In regard whereof, the Grecians had wont to say, That young men are for action; old men, for advice: and, among the Romans, we know, that the Senators take their name from age.

That, therefore, which is the weakness of old men's eyes, That, their visual spirits not uniting till some distance, they better discern things further off, is the praise and strength of their mental eyes: they see either judgments or advantages afar off, and accordingly frame their determinations. It is observed, that old lutes sound better than new: and it was Rehoboam's folly and undoing, that he would rather follow the counsel of his green heads that stood before him, than of those grave senators that had stood before his wiser father; 1 Kings xii. 6, &c.

Not that mere age is, of itself, thus rich in wisdom and knowledge; but age, well cultured, well improved. There are old men, that do but live; or rather have a being, upon earth: so have stocks and stones, as well as they: who can have no proof of their many years, but their grey hairs and infirmities. There are those, who, like to Hermogenes, are old men, while they are boys; and children, when they are old men. These, the elder they grow, are so much more stupid. Time is an ill measure of age; which should rather be meted by proficiency, by ripeness of judgment, by the monuments of our commendable and useful labours. If we have thus bestowed ourselves, our autumn will shew what our spring was; and the colour of our hair will yield us more cause to fear our pride, than our dejection.

We accuse our age of many weaknesses and indispositions: but these imputations must not be universal: many of these are the faults of the person, not of the age. He said well, "As old wine doth not turn sour with age, no more doth every nature." Old oil is noted to be clearer and hotter, in a medicinal use, than new. There are those, who are pettish and crabbed, in youth: there are, contrarily, those, who are mild, gentle, and sociable, in their decayed years. There are those, who are crazy in their prime; and there are those, who, in their wane, are vigorous. There are those, who, ere the fulness of their age, have lost their memory; as Hermogenes, Cornivus, Antonius Caracalla, Georgius Trapezuntius, and Nizolius: there are those, whose intellectuals have so happily held out, that they have been best at the last. Plato, in his last year, which was fourscore and one, died, as it were, with his pen in his hand: Isocrates wrote his best piece, at ninety-four years: and it is said of Demosthenes, that when death summoned him, at a hundred years and somewhat more, he bemoaned himself, that he must now die, when he began to get some knowledge. And, as for spiritual graces and improvements, *Such, as be planted in the house of the Lord, shall flourish in the courts of our God: They*

also shall bring forth more fruit in their age, and shall be fat and well-liking; Ps. xcii. 13, 14.

(4.) But the chief benefit of our age is, our Near Approach to our Journey's End: for the end of all motion is rest; which when we have once attained, there remains nothing but fruition.

Now our age brings us, after a weary race, within some breathings of our goal: for, if young men may die, old men must: a condition, which a mere carnal heart bewails and abhors; complaining of nature, as niggardly in her dispensations of the shortest time to her noblest creature; and envying the oaks, which many generations of men must leave standing and growing.

No marvel: for the worldling thinks himself here at home; and looks upon death as a banishment: he hath placed his heaven here below; and can see nothing in his remove, but either annihilation or torment.

But, for us Christians, who *know, that while we are present in the body, we are absent from the Lord*; 2 Cor. v. 6: and do justly account ourselves foreigners, our life a pilgrimage, heaven our home: how can we but rejoice, that, after a tedious and painful travel, we do now draw near to the threshold of our Father's house; wherein we know there are many mansions, and all glorious? I could blush to hear a heathen * say, "If God would offer me the choice of renewing my age, and returning to my first childhood, I should heartily refuse it: for I should be loth, after I have passed so much of my race, to be called back from the goal to the bars of my first setting out:" and to hear a Christian whining and puling, at the thought of his dissolution. Where is our faith of a heaven, if, having been so long sea-beaten, we be loth to think of putting into the safe and blessed harbour of immortality?

CHAP. XV.

COMFORTS AGAINST THE FEARS AND PAINS OF DEATH.

SECT. 1.

The fear of death natural.

THOU fearest death:—Thou wert not a man, if thou didst not so: the holiest, the wisest, the strongest, that ever were, have done no less. He is the King of Fear: and, therefore, may and must command it. Thou mayest hear the man after God's own heart say, *The sorrows of death compassed me*; Ps. cxvi. 3: and, again, *My soul is full of troubles: my life draweth nigh to the grave: I am counted with them that go down to the pit, as a man that hath no*

* Cicero de Senect.

strength; free among the dead; Ps. lxxxviii. 3, 4, 5. Thou mayest hear great and good Hezekiah, upon the message of his death, chattering like a crane or a swallow, and mourning as a dove; Is. xxxviii. 14.

Thou fearest, as a man: I cannot blame thee: but thou must overcome thy fear, as a Christian; which thou shalt do, if, from the terrible aspect of the messenger, thou shalt cast thine eyes upon the gracious and amiable face of the God that sends him. Holy David shews the way: *The snares of death prevented me: In my distress I called upon the Lord, and cried unto my God: he heard my voice out of his temple, and my cry came before him even unto his ears;* Ps. xviii. 5, 6. Lo, he, that is *our God, is the God of salvation; and unto God, the Lord, belong the issues of death;* Ps. lxviii. 20. Make him thy friend, and death shall be no other than advantage; Phil. i. 21.

It is true, as the Wise Man saith, that "God made not death;" but that, "through the envy of the Devil, death came into the world;" Wis. i. 13. ii. 24: but it is as true, that though God made him not, yet he is pleased to employ him as his messenger; to summon some souls to judgment, to invite others to glory: and, for these latter, *Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his Saints;* Ps. cxvi. 15: and what reason hast thou to abominate that, which God accounts precious?

SECT. 2.

Remedy of fear, acquaintance with death.

Thou art afraid of death:—Acquaint thyself with him more; and thou shalt fear him less. Even bears and lions, which at the first sight affrighted us, upon frequent viewing lose their terror. Inure thine eyes to the sight of death; and that face shall begin not to displease thee. Thou must shortly dwell with him for a long time: for *the days of darkness* are *many;* Eccl. xi. 8. Do thou, in the mean time, entertain him: let him be sure to be thy daily guest. Thus the blessed Apostle, *I protest, by our rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus, I die daily;* 1 Cor. xv. 31. Bid him to thy board: lodge him in thy bed: talk with him in thy closet: walk with him in thy garden, as Joseph of Arimathea did; and by no means suffer him to be a stranger to thy thoughts. This familiarity shall bring thee to a delight in the company of him, whom thou didst at first abhor: so as thou shalt, with the Chosen Vessel, say, *I have a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is best of all;* Phil. i. 23.

SECT. 3.

The misapprehension of death.

THOU art grievously afraid of death:—Is it not upon a mistaking? Our fears are apt to imagine and to aggravate evils. Even Christ himself, walking upon the waters, was by the disciples troubled at, as some dreadful apparition.

Perhaps, my son, thou lookest at death as some utter abolition or extinction of thy being; and nature must needs shrink back at the thought of not being at all.

This is a foul and dangerous misprision.

It is but a departing, which thou callest a death. See how God himself styles it to the Father of the Faithful: *Thou shalt go to thy fathers, in peace: thou shalt be buried, in a good old age;* Gen. xv. 15: and, of his holy grandchild, Israel, the Spirit of God says, *When Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people;* Gen. xlix. 33. Lo, dying is no other than going to our fathers, and gathering to our people; with whom we do and shall live in that other and better world, and with whom we shall re-appear glorious. Let but thy faith represent death to thee in this shape, and he shall not appear so formidable.

Do but mark in what familiar terms it pleased God, to confer with his servant Moses, concerning his death: *Get thee up into this mountain Abarim, unto Mount Nebo, which is in the land of Moab; and behold the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel for a possession: and die in the mount whither thou goest up, and be gathered to thy people; as Aaron thy brother died in mount Hor, and was gathered to his people;* Deut. xxxii. 49, 50. Lo, it is no more than *Go up, and die.* Should it have been but to go a day's journey in the wilderness to sacrifice, it could have been no otherwise expressed; or, as if it were all one to go up to Sinai to meet with God, and to go up to Nebo and die.

Neither is it otherwise with us: only the difference is, that Moses must first see the Land of Promise, and then die: whereas, we first die, and then see the Promised Land.

SECT. 4.

The common condition of men.

THOU art troubled with the fear of death:—What reason hast thou to be afflicted with that, which is the common condition of mankind? Remember, my son, the words of Joshua, the victorious leader of God's people: *Behold, this day,* saith he, *I am going the way of all the earth;* Josh. xxiii. 14.

If all the earth go this way, couldst thou be so fond as to think

there should be a by-path left for thee, wherein thou mayest tread alone? Were it so, that monarchs and princes, that patriarchs, prophets, apostles were allowed an easier passage out of the world, thou mightest perhaps find some pretence of reason, to repine at a painful dissolution: but now, since all go one way; and, as the wise Philosopher * says, those, which are unequal in their birth, are in their deaths equal; there can be no ground for a discontented murmur. Grudge, if thou wilt, that thou art a man: grudge not, that, being a man, thou must die; Ps. lxxxix. 48. Ps. xc. 3, 5, 7.

It is true that those, whom the last day shall find alive, shall not die; but they shall be changed: but this change of theirs shall be no other, than an analogical death, wherein there shall be a speedy consumption of all our corrupt and drossy parts; so as the pain must be so much the more intense, by how much it is more short than in the ordinary course of death. Briefly, that change is a death, and our death is a change, as Job styles it; Job xiv. 14: the difference is not in the pain, but in the speed of the transaction.

"Fear not," then, "the sentence of death: remember them, that have been before thee, and that come after; for this is the sentence of the Lord over all flesh;" Ecclus. xli. 3.

SECT. 5.

Death not feared by some.

THOU fearest death:—So do not infants, children, distracted persons: as the Philosopher † observes. Why should use of reason render us more cowardly, than defect of reason doth them?

Thou fearest that, which some others wish. "O death, how acceptable is thy sentence to the needy; and to him, whose strength faileth, that is now in the last age, and is vexed with all things; and to him, that despaireth, and hath lost patience!" Ecclus. xli. 2. *Wherefore is light given,* saith Job, *to him, that is in misery; and life unto the bitter in soul? Which long for death, but it cometh not; and dig for it more than for hid treasures: Which rejoice exceedingly, and are glad when they can find the grave;* Job iii. 20, 21, 22.

How many are there, that invite the violence of death; and, if he refuse it, do, as Ignatius threatened he would do to the lions, force his assault! Death is the same to all: the difference is in the disposition of the entertainers. Couldst thou look upon death with their eyes, he should be as welcome to thee, as he is unto them. At the least, why shouldst thou not labour to have thy heart so wrought upon, that this face of death, which seems lovely and desirable to some, may not appear over-terrible to thee?

* Sen. Ep. 91. † Sen. Ep. 36.

SECT. 6.

Our death-day better than our birth-day.

THOU art afraid to die:—Couldst thou then have been capable of the use of reason, thou wouldst have been more afraid of coming into the world, than thou art now of going out: for why should we be more afraid of the better, than of the worse?

Better is the day of death, than the day of one's birth, saith the Preacher; Eccl. vii. 2. Better, every way. Our birth begins our miseries; our death ends them: our birth enters the best of men into a wretched world; our death enters the good into a world of glory.

Certainly, were it not for our infidelity, as we came crying into the world, so we should go singing out of it. And, if some have solemnized their birth-day with feasting and triumph, the Church of old hath bestowed that name and cost upon the death's day of her Martyrs and Saints.

SECT. 7.

The sting of death pulled out.

THOU abhorrest death; and fleest from it, as from a serpent:—But dost thou know that his sting is gone? What harm can there be in a stingless snake? Hast thou not seen or heard of some delicate dames, that have carried them, thus corrected, in their bosom, for coolness, and for the pleasure of their smoothness? *The sting of death is sin;* 1 Cor. xv. 56. He may hiss and wind about us: but he cannot hurt us, when that sting is pulled out. Look up, O thou believing soul, to thy Blessed Saviour, who hath plucked out this sting of death; and happily triumphed over it, both for himself and thee; *O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?*

SECT. 8.

Death but a parting, to meet again.

THY soul and body, old companions, are loth to part:—Why, man, it is but the forbearing their wonted society, for a while: they do but take leave of each other, till they meet again in the day of Resurrection; and, in the mean time, they are both safe, and the better part happy.

It is commendable in the Jews, otherwise the worst of men, that they call their grave בת חיים "The house of the living;" and, when they return from the burial of their neighbours, they pluck

up the grass, and cast it into the air, with those words of the Psalmist, *They shall flourish and put forth, as the grass upon the earth;* Ps. lxxii. 16.

Did we not believe a Resurrection of the one part and a re-uniting of the other, we had reason to be utterly daunted with the thought of a dissolution: now we have no cause to be dismayed with a little intermission.

Is it a heathen man or a Christian, (such I wish he had been), whom I hear say, "The death, which we so fear and flee from, doth but respite life for a while, doth not take it away: the day will come, which shall restore us to the light again *." Settle thy soul, my son, in this assurance; and thou canst not be discomforted, with a necessary parting.

SECT. 9.

Death but a sleep.

THOU art afraid of death:—When thou art weary of thy day's labour, art thou afraid of rest?

Hear what thy Saviour, who is the Lord of Life, esteems of death; *Our friend Lazarus sleepeth;* John xi. 11: and of Jairus's daughter; *The maid is not dead; but sleepeth;* Matt. ix. 24. Luke viii. 52.

Neither useth the Spirit of God any other language, concerning his servants under the Old Testament: *Now shall I sleep in the dust,* saith holy Job; ch. vii. 21: and of David, *When thy days be fulfilled,* and *thou shalt sleep with thy fathers;* 2 Sam. vii. 12.

Nor yet under the New: *For this cause, many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep,* saith the Apostle; 1 Cor. xi. 30.

Lo, the philosophers of old were wont to call sleep the Brother of Death; but God says, death is no other than sleep itself: a sleep, both sure and sweet. When thou liest down at night to thy repose, thou canst not be so certain to awake again in the morning; as, when thou layest thyself down in death, thou art sure to awake in the morning of the Resurrection. Out of this bodily sleep, thou mayest be affrightedly startled with some noises of sudden horror; with some fearful dreams; with tumults, or alarms of war; but here, thou shalt rest quietly in the place of silence (Ps. xciv. 17.), free from all inward and outward disturbances; while, in the mean time, thy soul shall see none but visions of joy and blessedness.

But, oh the sweet and heavenly expression of our last rest, and the issue of our happy resuscitation, which our gracious Apostle hath laid forth, for the consolation of his mournful Thessalonians! *For, if we believe,* saith he, *that Jesus died and rose again; even so them also, which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him.* Lo, our belief is antidote enough against the worst of death. And why are

* Sen. Ep. 36.

we troubled with death, when we believe that Jesus died? and what a triumph is this over death, that the same Jesus, who died, rose again! and what a comfort it is, that the same Jesus, who arose, shall both come again, and bring all his with him in glory! and, lastly, what a strong cordial is this to all good hearts, that all those, which die well, do sleep in Jesus! Thou thoughtest, perhaps, of sleeping in the bed of the grave; and there, indeed, is rest: but he tells thee of sleeping in the bosom of Jesus; and there is immortality, and blessedness. O Blessed Jesu, *in thy presence is the fulness of joy, and at thy right-hand are pleasures for evermore.* Who would desire to walk in the world, when he may sleep with Jesus?

SECT. 10.

Death sweetened to us by Christ.

THOU fearest death:—It is much on what terms, and in what form, death presents himself to thee: if as an enemy, (as that is somewhere his style, *the last enemy, death,*) thy unpreparation shall make him dreadful; thy readiness and fortitude shall take off his terror: if as a messenger of God to fetch thee to happiness, what reason hast thou to be afraid of thine own bliss?

It is one thing, what death is in himself, a privation of life; as such, nature cannot choose but abhor him: another thing, what he is by Christ made unto us, an introduction to life, a harbinger to glory. Why would the Lord of Life have yielded unto death; and, by yielding, vanquished him: but that he might alter and sweeten death to us; and, of a fierce tyrant, make him a friend and benefactor? And, if we look upon him thus changed, thus reconciled, how can we choose, but bid him welcome?

SECT. 11.

The painfulness of Christ's death.

THOU art afraid of the pangs of death:—There are those, that have died without any great sense of pain: some we have known to have yielded up their souls, without so much as a groan: and how knowest thou, my son, what measure God hath allotted to thee? Our death is a sea-voyage, (so the Apostle, *I desire to launch forth* *:) wherein some find a rough and tempestuous passage; others, calm and smooth: such thine may prove; so as thy dissolution may be more easy, than a fit of thy sickness.

But, if thy God have determined otherwise, *Look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith,* Heb. xii. 2. the Son of God, the

* Phil. i. 23. Ἀναλῦσαι.

Lord of Glory. See with what agonies he conflicted, what torments he endured in his death, for thee. Look upon his bloody sweat, his bleeding temples, his furrowed back, his nailed hands and feet, his racked joints, his pierced side. Hear his strong cries. Consider the shame, the pain, the curse of the cross, which he underwent for thy sake. Say, whether thy sufferings can be comparable to his. He is a cowardly and unworthy soldier, that follows his general sighing. Lo, these are the steps, wherein thy God and Saviour hath trod before thee. Walk on courageously in this deep and bloody way: after a few paces thou shalt overtake him in glory: for, *If we suffer with him, we shall also reign together with him;* 2 Tim. ii. 12.

SECT. 12.

The vanity and miseries of life.

THOU shrinkest at the thought of death:—Is it not, for that thou hast over-valued life; and made thy home on earth? Delicate persons, that have pampered themselves at home, are loth to stir abroad; especially upon hard and uncouth voyages. Perhaps, it is so with thee.

Wherein I cannot but much pity thy mistaking; in placing thy contentment there, where a greater and wiser man could find nothing but vanity and vexation. Alas, what can be our exile, if this be our home? What woeful entertainment is this, to be enamoured on! What canst thou meet with here, but distempered humours, hard usages, violent passages, bodily sicknesses, sad complaints, hopes disappointed, frequent miscarriages, wicked plots, cruel menaces, deadly executions, momentary pleasures sauced with lasting sorrows; lastly, shadows of joy, and real miseries? Are these the things, that so bewitch thee, that, when death calls at thy door, thou art ready to say to it, as the Devil said to our Saviour, *Art thou come to torment me before the time?* Matt. viii. 29. Are these those winning contentments, that cause thee to say of the world, as Peter said of Mount Tabor, *Master, it is good for us to be here?* Matt. xvii. 4.

If thou have any faith in thee, (and what dost thou profess to be a Christian without it?) look up to the things of the other world, whither thou art going: and see whether that true life, pure joy, perfect felicity, and the eternity of all these, may not be worthy to draw up thy heart to a longing desire of the fruition of them; and a contemptuous disvalution of all the earth can promise, in comparison of this infinite blessedness.

It was one of the defects, which our late noble and learned philosopher, the Lord Verulam *, found in our physicians, that they do not study those remedies, that might procure εὐθανασίαν, the "easy passage" of their patients, since they must needs die,

* Lord Bacon, his "Advancement of Learning."

through the gates of death. Such helps I must leave to the care of the skilful Sages of Nature: the use whereof I suppose must be with much caution, lest, while they endeavour to sweeten death, they shorten life. But, let me prescribe and commend to thee, my son, the true spiritual means of thy happy Euthanasia; which can be no other, than this faithful disposition of the labouring soul, that can truly say, *I know whom I have believed;* 2 Tim. i. 12: *I have fought a good fight: I have finished my course: I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the Righteous Judge, shall give me at that day;* ch. iv. 7, 8.

SECT. 13.

Examples of courageous resolutions in others.

THOU startest back at the mention of death:—How canst thou but blush to read of that heathen martyr, Socrates, who, when the message of death was brought to him, could applaud the news as most joyful * ? or, of a Cardinal of Rome, (who yet expected a tormenting Purgatory,) that received the intimation of his approaching death, with *Buona nuova, buona nuova, O che buona nuova è questa* † ? Is not this their confidence thy shame; who, believing that *when our earthly house of this tabernacle is dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens;* 2 Cor. v. 1: yet shrinkest at the motion of taking the possession of it? Canst thou, with dying Mithridates, when he took his unwilling farewell of the world, cry out, "Oh, Light!" when thou art going to a light more glorious than this thou leavest, than ‡ the sun is more than a weak rush-candle?

It is our infidelity, my son, it is our mere infidelity, that makes us unwilling to die. Did we think, according to the cursed opinion of some fanatic persons, that the soul sleeps as well as the body, from the moment of the dissolution, till the day of Resurrection; or, did we doubt lest we should wander to unknown places, where we cannot be certain of the entertainment; or, did we fear a scorching trial, upon the emigration, in flames little inferior, for the time, to those of hell; there were some cause for us to tremble at the approach of death: but, now that we can boldly say, with the Wise Man, "The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and there shall no torment touch them: In the sight of the unwise they seemed to die; and their departure is taken for misery, And their going from us to be utter destruction: but they are in peace;" Wisd. iii. 1, 2, 3: O thou of little faith, why fearest thou? Why dost thou not chide thyself, as that dying Saint did of

* Plato. Phædone. † F. Coffin. de Morte Bellarmini, p. 28.

‡ The Third Folio reads this sentence, (without any meaning) "than the sun is more weak than a rush-candle:" I have restored the passage as it stands in the original edition, 12mo. 1646. EDITOR.

old, "Go forth, my soul, go boldly forth: what art thou afraid of?"

Lo, the angels of God are ready to receive thee, and to carry thee up to thy glory: neither shalt thou sooner have left this wretched body, than thou shalt be possessed of thy God: after a momentary darkness cast upon nature, thou shalt enjoy the beatifical vision of the glorious God: be not afraid to be happy; but say, out of faith, that which Jonah said in anger; *It is better for me to die, than to live;* Jonah iv. 3.

SECT. 14.

The happy advantages of death.

"I AM afraid to die:"—This is the voice of nature: but wilt thou hear what grace saith? *To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.* If, therefore, mere nature reign in thee, thou canst not but be affrighted with death: but, if true grace be prevalent in thy soul, that guest shall not be unwelcome.

Was ever any man afraid of profit and advantage? such is death to the faithful. Whosoever he be, that finds Christ to be his life, shall be sure to find death his gain; for that he is thereby brought to a more full and near communion with Christ: whereas, before, he enjoyed his Saviour only by the dim apprehension of his faith; now, he doth clearly and immediately enjoy that glorious presence, which only makes blessedness.

This is it, which causeth death to change his copy; and renders him, who is of himself formidable, pleasing and beneficial. *I desire to depart, and to be with Christ*, Phil. i. 23. saith the man, who was rapt up to the third heaven. Had it been only departing, surely he had had no such great edge to it; but, *to depart, and be with Christ* is that, which ravisheth his soul.

When the heathen Socrates was to die for his religion, he comforted himself with this, That he should go to the place, where he should see Orphæus, Homer, Musæus, and the other Worthies of the former Ages. Poor man! could he have come to have known *God manifested in the flesh, and received up into glory*, 1 Tim. iii. 16. and therein that glorified flesh sitting at the right-hand of Majesty; could he have attained to know the blessed order of the Cherubim, and Seraphim, Angels, Archangels, Principalities, and Powers, and the rest of the most glorious Hierarchy of Heaven; could he have been acquainted with that Celestial Choir of the *spirits of just men made perfect;* Heb. xii. 23. could he have reached to know the God and Father of Spirits, the Infinitely and Incomprehensibly Glorious Deity, whose presence transfuses everlasting blessedness into all those citizens of glory; and could he have known that he should have an undoubted interest, instantly upon his dissolution, in that infinite bliss: how much more gladly

would he have taken off his hemlock; and how much more merrily would he have passed into that happier world!

All this we know; and are no less assured of it, than of our present being: with what comfort, therefore, should we think of changing our present condition, with a blessed immortality!

How sweet a song was that of old Simeon; *Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation!* Luke ii. 29, 30. Lo, that which he saw by the eye of his sense, thou seest by the eye of thy faith; even *the Lord's Christ;* v. 26: he saw him in weakness; thou seest him in glory: why shouldst thou not depart, not in peace only, but in joy and comfort?

How did the holy proto-martyr Stephen triumph over all the rage of his enemies, and the violent fury of death, when he had once seen *the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right-hand of God!* Acts vii. 56. Lo, God offers the same blessed prospect to the eye of thy soul. Faith is the key, that can open the heaven of heavens. Fix thy eyes upon that glorious and saving object, thou canst not but lay down thy body in peace; and send up thy soul into the hands of him that bought it, with the sweet and cheerful recommendation of, *Lord, Jesus receive my spirit.*

CHAP. XVI.

COMFORTS AGAINST THE TERRORS OF JUDGMENT.

SECT. 1.

Aggravations of the fearfulness of the Last Judgment.

THOU apprehendest it aright. Death is terrible; but Judgment more: both these succeed upon the same decree; *It is appointed unto man once to die, but after this the Judgment;* Heb. ix. 27.

Neither is it more terrible, than less thought on. Death, because he strikes on all hands, and lays before us so many sad examples of mortality, cannot but sometimes take up our hearts; but the Last Judgment, having no visible proofs to force itself upon our thoughts, too seldom affrights us.

Yet who can conceive the terror of that day? before which, *The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood;* Acts ii. 20: that day, *which shall burn as an oven, when all the proud, and all that do wickedly shall be as the stubble;* Mal. iv. 1: that day, *in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein shall be burnt up;* 2 Pet. iii. 10: that day, *wherein the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not*

the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; 2 Thess. i. 7, 8: that day, *wherein the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire: For by fire, and by his sword, will the Lord plead with all flesh*; Isa. lxvi. 15, 16: that day, *wherein the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him; and shall sit upon the throne of his glory, and all nations shall be gathered before him*; Matthew xxv. 31, 32: that day, *wherein all the kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him*; Rev. i. 7: shortly, *that great and terrible day of the Lord*, (Joel. ii. 31.) wherein, if the powers of heaven shall be shaken, how can the heart of man remain unmoved? wherein, if the world be dissolved, who can bear up?

Alas, we are ready to tremble at but a thunder-crack, in a poor cloud; and at a small flash of lightning, that glances through our eyes: what shall we do, when the whole frame of the heavens shall break in pieces, and when all shall be on a flame about our ears? Oh, *who may abide in the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth?* Mal. iii. 2.

SECT. 2.

The condition of the elect.

YET be of good cheer, my son: amidst all this horror, there is comfort.

Whether thou be one of those, whom it shall please God to reserve alive upon earth to the sight of this dreadful day, He only knows, in whose hands our times are. This we are sure of, that we are upon the last hours of the last days. Justly do we spit in the faces of St. Peter's *Scoffers, that say, Where is the promise of his coming?* 2 Pet. iii. 4: well knowing, that *the Lord is not slack, as some account slackness*, v. 9. but that *he, that shall come, will come, and not tarry*; Heb. x. 37. Well mayest thou live to see the Son of Man come in the clouds of heaven, and to be an actor in this last scene of the world. If so, let not thy heart be dismayed with the expectation of these fearful things. Thy change shall be sudden and quick: one moment shall put off thy mortality, and clothe thee with that incorruption, which shall not be capable of fear and pain. The majesty of this appearance shall add to thy joy and glory. Thou shalt then see *the Lord himself descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God*; 1 Thess. iv. 16. Thou shalt see thyself, and *those* other *which are alive and remain*, to be *caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so* shalt thou *be ever with the Lord*; v. 17. Upon this assurance, how justly may the Apostle subjoin, *Wherefore comfort one another with these words!* v. 18. Certainly, if ever there were comfort to be had in any words, not of men or angels only, but of the Ever-Living God, the God of Truth; these are they, that can and will afford it to our trembling souls.

But, if thou be one of the number of those, whom God hath determined to call off, beforehand; and, by a faithful death, to prevent the great day of his appearance: here is nothing for thee, but matter of a *joy unspeakable and full of glory:* for, *those, that sleep in Jesus, shall God bring with him;* 1 Thess. iv. 14. They shall be part of that glorious train, which shall attend the majesty of the great Judge of the World; 1 Cor. vi. 2: yea, they shall be co-assessors to the Lord of Heaven and Earth in this awful judicature, as sitting upon the bench when guilty men and angels shall be at the bar; v. 3. *To him, that overcometh*, saith the Lord Christ, *will I grant to sit with me in my throne; even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne;* Rev. iii. 21. What place then is here for any terror; since, the more state and heavenly magnificence, the more joy and glory?

SECT. 3.

Awe more fit for thoughts of judgment, than fear.

THOU art afraid to think of judgment:—I would rather thou shouldst be awful, than timorous.

When St. Paul discoursed of the *judgment to come*, it is no marvel that Felix trembled; Acts xxiv. 25: but the same Apostle, when he had pressed to his Corinthians the certainty and generality of our appearance before the Judgment-Seat of Christ, *that every one may receive the things done in his body, whether good or evil;* addeth, *Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest to God, &c.* 2 Cor. v. 11.

Lo, the holiest man may not be exempted from the dread, but from the slavish fear of the Great Judge. We know his Infinite Justice: we are conscious to ourselves of our manifold failings: how can we lay these two together, and not fear? But this fear works not in us a malignant kind of repining at the severe tribunal of the Almighty; as, commonly, whom we fear we hate: but rather a careful endeavour so to approve ourselves, that we may be acquitted by him, and appear blameless in his presence.

How justly may we tremble, when we look upon our own actions, our own deserts! but how confidently may we appear at that bar, when we are beforehand assured of a discharge! *Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord;* Rom. v. 1. When we think of an universal conflagration of the world, how can we but fear? But when we think of a happy *restitution of all things* (Acts iii. 21.) in this day, how can we but rejoice in trembling?

SECT. 4.

In that great and terrible day, our Advocate is our Judge.

THOU quakest at the expectation of the Last Judgment:—Surely, the very majesty of that Great Assize must needs be formidable.

And, if the very delivery of the Law on Mount Sinai were with so dreadful a pomp of thunder and lightning, of fire, smoke, earthquakes, that the Israelites were half dead with fear in receiving it; with what terrible magnificence, shall God come to require an account of that Law, at the hands of the whole sinful generation of mankind!

Represent unto thy thoughts, that, which was shewed of old to the Prophet Daniel, in vision. Imagine that thou sawest *the Ancient of Days sitting upon a throne like the fiery flame; a fiery stream issuing and coming forth from before him; thousand thousands ministering unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand standing before him; the judgment set, and the books opened;* Dan. vii. 9, 10. Or, as John, the Daniel of the New Testament, saw *a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heavens fled away; and the dead, both small and great, standing before God; and the books opened; and the dead judged out of those things, which were written in those books, according to their works;* Rev. xx. 11, 12. Let the eyes of thy mind see, beforehand, that, which these bodily eyes shall once see; and tell me how thou feelest thyself affected with a sight of such a Judge, such an appearance, such a process: and, if thou findest thyself in a trembling condition, cheer up thyself with this, That thy Judge is thine Advocate; That, upon that throne, there sits not greater Majesty than Mercy. It is thy Saviour, that shall sentence thee.

How safe art thou then, under such hands! Canst thou fear, that he will doom thee to death, who died to give thee life? Canst thou fear, he will condemn thee for those sins, which he hath given his blood to expiate? Canst thou fear the rigour of that justice, which he hath so fully satisfied? Canst thou misdoubt the miscarriage of that soul, which he hath so dearly bought?

No, my son, all this divine state and magnificence makes for thee. Let those guilty and impenitent souls, who have *heaped unto themselves wrath against the day of wrath*, Rom. ii. 5: quake at the glorious Majesty of the Son of God; for whom *nothing remains, but a fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries;* Heb. x. 26, 27. But, for thee, who art not only reconciled unto God by the mediation of the Son of his Love, but art also incorporated into Christ, and made a true limb of his mystical body; thou art bidden, together with all the faithful, to *look up, and lift up thy head; for now the day of thy redemption is come;* Luke xxi. 28. Eph. iv. 30.

And, indeed, how canst thou do other, since, by virtue of this blessed union with thy Saviour, this glory is thine? every member hath an interest in the honour of the Head.

Rejoice, therefore, in the day of the Lord Jesus; Phil. ii. 17, 18: and, when all the tribes of the earth shall wail, (Rev. i. 7.) do thou sing and rejoice; and call to the heavens and the earth to bear thee company: *Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad: let the sea make a noise, and all that is therein. Let the field be joyful, and all that is in it: then shall all the trees of the*

wood rejoice before the Lord; for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth; and with righteousness to judge the world, and the people with his truth; Ps. xcvi. 11, 12, 13.

SECT. 5.

Frequent meditation and due preparation, the remedies of our fear.

THOU art affrighted with the thought of that great day:—Think of it oftener, and thou shalt less fear it. It will come, both surely and suddenly: let thy frequent thoughts prevent it. It will come, as a thief in the night; without warning, without noise: let thy careful vigilance always expect it; and thy soul shall be sure not to be surprised, not to be confounded. Thine audit is both sure and uncertain: sure, that it will be; uncertain, when it will be. If thou wilt approve thyself a good steward, have thine account always ready: set thy reckoning still even, betwixt God and thy soul: *Blessed is the servant, whom his Master shall find so doing;* Matt. xxiv. 46. Look upon these heavens and this earth, as dissolving; and think, with Jerome, that thou hearest the last trump, and the voice of the archangel shrilling in thine ears, as once thou shalt, *Arise, ye dead, and come to judgment.* Shortly, let it be thy main care, *to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity;* Titus ii. 12, 13, 14: *Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like to his glorious body; according to the working, whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself;* Phil. iii. 21.

CHAP. XVII.

COMFORTS AGAINST THE FEARS OF OUR SPIRITUAL ENEMIES.

SECT. 1.

The great power of evil spirits, and their restraint.

THOU art affrighted at the thought of thy spiritual enemies:—No marvel: neither earth nor hell hath any thing equally formidable. Those three things, which are wont to make enmity dreadful and dangerous (power, malice, subtlety,) are met in them: neither is it easy to say, in which of these they are most eminent. Certainly, were we to be matched with them on even hand, there were just cause; not of fear only, but of despair.

"I could tremble," thou sayest, "to think that Satan hath done what he can do: What contestation he enabled the Egyptian sor-

cerers to hold with Moses: how they turned every man his rod into a serpent; so as they seemed to have the advantage, for the time, of many serpents crawling and hissing in Pharaoh's pavement, for one; Exod. vii. 11, 12: how they turned the waters into blood; v. 22: how they brought frogs upon the land of Egypt; ch. viii. 7: as if, thus far, the power of hell would presume to hold competition with heaven: What furious tempests he raises in the air; as that, which, from the wilderness, beat upon the four corners of the house of Job's eldest son, and overthrew it; Job i. 19: lo, Job was *the greatest man in the east;* Job. i. 3: his heir did not dwell in a cottage: that strong fabric could not stand against this hurricane of Satan: What fearful apparitions he makes in the upper regions: what great wonders he doth, causing fire to come down from heaven on the earth, in the sight of men; Rev. xiii. 13: Lastly, what grievous tyranny he exerciseth upon all *the children of disobedience;*" Eph. v. 6.

Couldst thou look for any less, my son, from those, whom the Spirit of God himself styles, *principalities and powers*, and *rulers of the darkness of this world*, and *spiritual wickednesses in high places*, and *the prince of the power of the air?* Eph. vi. 12. ii. 2. Surely, it were no mastery to be a Christian, if we had not powerful opposites.

But dost thou not, withal, consider, that all this power is by concession; and the exercise of it but with permission, with limitation? What power can there be in any creature, which is not derived from the Almighty? This measure the Infinite Creator was pleased to communicate to them, as angels; which they retain and exercise still, as devils: their damnation hath stripped them of their glory; but we know not of how much of their strength.

And, seest thou not how their power is bounded? Those, that could, in appearance, turn their rods into serpents, could not keep all their serpents from being devoured of that one serpent of Moses: those, that could bring frogs upon Egypt, cannot bring a baser creature, lice: those, that were suffered to bring frogs, shall not have power to take them away; Exod. vii. 12. viii. 18, 19; 8—11. Restrained powers must know their limits; and we, knowing them, must set limits to our fears. A lion chained up can do less harm, than a cur let loose. What is it to thee, how powerful the evil spirits are, while they are, by an over-ruling power, tied up to their stake that they cannot hurt thee?

SECT. 2.

The fear of the number of evil spirits, and the remedy of it.

THY fears are increased with their number: they are as many, as powerful. One demoniac was possessed with a legion: how many legions then shall we think there are, to tempt those millions of

men, which live upon the face of the earth, whereof no one is free from their continual solicitations to evil! That holy man, whom our counterfeit hermits would pretend to imitate in the vision of his retiredness, saw the air full of them, and of their snares for mankind; and, were our eyes as clear as his, we might perhaps meet with the same prospect:—

But be not dismayed, my son. Couldst thou borrow the eyes of the servant of a holier master, thou shouldst see, that *there are more with us, than they that are against us;* 2 Kings vi. 16. Thou shouldst see the blessed angels of God, pitching their tents about thee; as the more powerful, vigilant, constant guardians of thy soul: lo, these are those valiant ones, which *stand about thy bed: They all hold swords, being expert in war: every one hath his sword upon his thigh, because of fear in the night;* Cant. iii. 7, 8.

Fear not, therefore; but make *the Lord, even the Most High, thy habitation.* Then, *there shall no evil befal thee: neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands; lest thou dash thy foot against a stone;* Ps. xci. 9—12: yea, and, besides this safe indemnity, *Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon, shalt thou trample under feet;* v. 13.

In secular enmity, true valour may be oppressed, will not easily be daunted with multitude. *I will not be afraid of ten thousand,* saith David; Ps. iii. 6. *They came about me like bees; but, in the name of the Lord, will I destroy them;* Ps. cxviii. 12. It was a brave resolution in that general, who, when one of his soldiers could tell him, that the cloud of Persian arrows shot at them darkened the sun: "Be of good cheer," said he, "we shall fight in the shade."

Answerable whereunto was that heroical determination of Luther, who, after his engagements, against all threats and dissuasions, would go into the city of Worms, though there were as many devils in it as tiles upon their houses. And why should not we imitate this confidence? What if there were as many devils in the air, as there are spires of grass on the earth? *God is our refuge and strength; a very present help in trouble. Therefore will we not fear, though the earth be removed; though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea;* Ps. xlvi. 1, 2. *Behold, God is our salvation: we will trust, and not be afraid; for the Lord Jehovah is our strength, and our song: he also is become our salvation;* Is. xii. 2. *Let God arise, and let his enemies be scattered; let them also, that hate him, flee before him: Like as the smoke vanisheth, so shalt thou drive them away;* Ps. lxviii. 1, 2.

SECT. 3.

The malice of the evil spirits, and our fears thereof remedied.

But, oh, the malice of those infernal spirits, implacable and deadly; whose trade is temptation and accusation; whose delight is tor-

ment; whose music is shrieks and howlings, and groans, and gnashing; and whose main drift is no less, than the eternal death and damnation of miserable mankind!—

Why should we, my son, expect other from him, who is professedly the manslayer from the beginning; that carries nothing but destruction both in his name and nature; that *goes about* continually, *like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour?*

Surely, this malignity is restless: neither will take up with any thing on this side hell:—

But, comfort thyself in this, that, in spite of all the malice of hell, thou art safe. Dost thou not know, that there stands by thee the victorious *Lion of the Tribe of Judah*, whom that Infernal Ravener dare not look in the face? Dost thou not remember, that, when the sentence was pronounced of eternal enmity, between the Seed of the Woman and the seed of the serpent, it was with this doom, *It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel?* Gen. iii. 15. Lo, a bruise of a man's heel is far from the heart; but a bruise of the serpent's head is mortal: there his sting, there his life lies. Neither did the Seed of the Woman, Christ Jesus, this for himself, who was infinitely above all the power and malice of the Devil; but for us, the impotent and sinful seed of man. *The God of Peace shall bruise Satan under your feet*, saith the blessed Apostle; Rom. xvi. 20: *under your feet;* not under his own, only; of whom God the Father had long before said, *Sit thou on my right-hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool;* Ps. cx. 1.

Yea, what do I speak of the future? Already is this great work done: already is this great work atchieved: for the Lord of Life, *having spoiled principalities and powers*, hath *made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them* on his Cross; Col. ii. 15. Lo, all the powers of hell were dragged after this Glorious Conqueror, when he was advanced upon that triumphant chariot.

Look, therefore, my son, upon these hellish forces as already vanquished; and know, that *in all things we are more than conquerors, through him, that loved us;* Rom. viii. 37. Only do thou, by the power of thy faith, apply unto thyself this great work, that thy Victorious Saviour hath done, for the salvation of all the world of believers.

SECT. 4.

The great subtlety of evil spirits, and the remedy of the fear of it.

Power, without malice, were harmless; and malice, without power, were impotent: but, when both are combined together, they are dreadful. But, whereas malice hath two ways to execute mischief, either force or fraud; the malice of Satan prevails more by this latter: so as the subtlety of these malignant spirits is more pernicious, than their power. In regard of his power, he is a *Lion;* in regard of his subtlety, he is a *Serpent;* Gen. iii. 1: yea, that *Old Serpent* (Rev. xii. 9. xx. 2.) whose craft must needs be more

closely increased, by the age and experience of so many thousand years:—

So much the more careful ought we to be, my son, *Lest Satan should get an advantage of us;* 2 Cor. ii. 11. This is that, he seeks; and, if our spiritual wisdom and circumspection be not the more, will be sure to find.

It is a great word, and too high for us, which the Apostle speaks; *For we are not ignorant of Satan's devices;* 2 Cor. ii. 11. Alas, he hath a thousand stratagems, that our weak simplicity is never able to reach unto. The wisest of us knows not the deceitfulness of his own heart; much less, can he dive into the plots of hell, that are against us. We hear and are forewarned of *the wiles of the Devil;* Eph. vi. 11: but what his special machinations are, how can we know; much less, prevent? Even *the children of this world,* saith our Saviour, *are, in their generation, wiser than the children of light;* Luke xvi. 8: how much more crafty is their Father, from whom their cunning is derived! Be as mean as thou wilt, my son, in thine own eyes: say, with Agur the son of Jakeh, *Surely, I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man: I neither learned wisdom, nor have the knowledge of the holy;* Prov. xxx. 2, 3.

But, whatever thou art in thyself, know what thou art, or mayest be, in thy God. Consider what the man after God's own heart sticks not to profess: *Thou, through thy commandments, hast made me wiser than mine enemies; for thou art ever with me;* Ps. cxix. 98. Lo, the *Spirit of Wisdom* (Deut. xxxiv. 9. Eph. i. 17.) is ours: and he, who is the Eternal Wisdom of the Father, is *made unto us wisdom,* as well as righteousness; 1 Cor. i. 30: and he, who overrules hell, hath said, *The gates of hell shall not prevail against* his Church. What are the gates of hell, but the deep plots and consultations of those infernal powers?

The serpent is the known emblem of subtlety. The serpents of the Egyptian sorcerers were all devoured by Moses's serpent: wherefore? but to shew us, that all the crafty counsels and machinations of hellish projectors are easily destroyed, by the power and wisdom of the Almighty? When all was done, it was the rod of God, that swallowed them all; and was yet still itself, when they were vanquished: so as that, whereby Satan thought to have won most honour to himself, ended in his shame and loss.

What an infinite advantage did the powers of darkness think to have made, in drawing our first parents, by their subtle suggestions, into sin; and, thereby, into perdition: as imagining, "Either mankind shall not be, or shall be ours!" The incomprehensible wisdom and mercy of our God disappointed their hopes; and took occasion, by man's fall, to raise him up to a greater glory; and so ordered it, that the Serpent's nibbling at the heel cost him the breaking of his head.

What trophies did that Wicked Spirit think to erect upon the ruins of miserable Job! and how was he baffled by the patience of that Saint! and how was that Saint doubled, both in his estate and honour, by his conquering patience!

How confidently did the subtlety of hell say, concerning the Son of God exhibited in the flesh; *This is the Heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours!* Matt. xxi. 38. Mark xii. 7. Luke xx. 14. How sure work did they think they had made, when they saw him, through their subtle procurement, nailed to the Cross, and dying upon that tree of shame and curse; when they saw him laid dead under a sealed and guarded gravestone! And now, behold, even now begins their confusion, and his triumph: now doth the Lord of Life begin to trample upon death and hell; and to perfect his own glory, and man's redemption, by his most glorious Resurrection.

And, as it was with the Head, so it is with the members. When Satan hath done his worst, they are holier upon their sins, and happier by their miscarriages. God finds out a way to improve their evils to advantage; and teaches them, of these vipers, to make sovereign treacles, and safe and powerful trochisees.

Shortly, the temptations of Satan sent out from his power, malice, subtlety, are no other than *fiery darts;* for their suddenness, impetuosity, penetration. If we can but hold out *the shield of faith* before us, they shall not be *quenched* only, but retorted into the face of him that sends them; Eph. vi. 16: and we shall, with the Chosen Vessel, find and profess, that, *in all things, we are more than conquerors, through him, that loved us;* Rom. viii. 37: and, in a bold defiance of all the powers of darkness, shall say, *I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord;* vv. 38, 39: To whom be all honour, glory, praise, power, and dominion, now and for evermore.

CHAP. XVIII.

THE UNIVERSAL RECIPE FOR ALL MALADIES.

THESE are, my son, special compositions of wholesome Recipes, for the several maladies of thy soul: wherein it shall be my happiness, to have suggested unto thee such thoughts, as may any whit avail to the alleviation of thy sorrows.

But, there is an Universal Remedy, which a skilfuller Physician hath ordained for all thy grievances; and I, from his hand, earnestly recommend to thee: *Is any among you afflicted? let him pray;* James v. 13. Lo here the great and sovereign *Panpharmacum* of the distressed soul; which is able to give ease to all the fore-mentioned complaints.

Art thou cast down upon thy sick-bed? *Call for the elders of the Church, and let them pray;* James v. 14. This was Hezekiah's recipe, when he was *sick unto death: He turned his face to the wall, and prayed;* 2 Kings xx. 1, 2. This was David's recipe: *Have mercy on me, O Lord; for I am weak: O Lord, heal me; for my*

bones are vexed; Ps. vi. 2. Take, therefore, the counsel of the Wise Man: "My son, in thy sickness be not negligent; but pray unto the Lord, and he will make thee whole;" Ecclus. xxxviii. 9.

Art thou soul-sick? Pray. So did holy David: *The sorrows of hell compassed me about; and the snares of death prevented me. In my distress, I called upon the Lord, and cried unto my God;* Ps. xviii. 5, 6. cxvi. 3, 4.

Art thou infested with importunate temptations? Pray. So did St. Paul, when the messenger of Satan was sent to buffet him: *Thrice, I besought the Lord that it might depart from me;* 2 Cor. xii. 8. So did David: *While I suffer thy terrors, I am distracted. Thy fierce wrath goeth over me;* Ps. lxxxviii. 15, 16: *But unto thee have I cried, O Lord; and, in the morning, shall my prayer prevent thee;* v. 13.

Art thou disheartened with the weakness of grace? Pray. So did David: *I am feeble and sore broken: I have roared, by reason of the disquietness of my heart: Lord, all my desire is before thee;* Ps. xxxviii. 8, 9.

Art thou afflicted with the slanders of evil tongues? Pray. So did David: *The mouth of the wicked and the mouth of the deceitful are opened against me: they have spoken against me with a lying tongue;* Ps. cix. 2. *Hold not thy peace, O God of my praise;* v. 1.

Art thou grieved or affrighted with the public calamities of war, famine, pestilence? Pray. So good Jehosaphat presseth God with his gracious promise, made to Solomon; 2 Chron. vii. 13, 14, 15. *If, when evil cometh upon us; as the sword, judgment, or pestilence, or famine; we stand before this house, and in thy presence, and cry unto thee in our affliction; then thou wilt hear and help;* 2 Chron. xx. 9. and shuts up his zealous supplication with, *neither know we what to do, but our eyes are upon thee;* v. 12.

Art thou afflicted with the loss of friends? Pray, and have recourse to thy God, as Ezekiel, when Peletiah, the son of Benaiah, died: *Then fell I down upon my face, and cried with a loud voice, and said, Ah, Lord God! wilt thou make a full end of the remnant of Israel?* Ezek. xi. 13.

Art thou distressed with poverty? Pray. So did David: *I am poor and needy, and my heart is wounded within me. I became also a reproach to them; when they, that looked upon me, shaked their heads. Help me, O Lord my God: Oh, save me, according to thy mercy;* Ps. cix. 22, 25, 26.

Art thou imprisoned? Pray. So did Jonah, when he was shut up within the living walls of the whale: *I cried, by reason of my affliction, unto the Lord;* Jonah ii. 2. So did Asaph: *Let the sighing of the prisoner come before thee; according to the greatness of thy power preserve thou them, that are appointed to die;* Ps. lxxix. 11.

Art thou driven from thy country? Pray. This is the remedy prescribed by Solomon, in his supplication to God: If thy people be carried away *into a land far off, or near: Yet, if they bethink themselves in the land whither they are carried, and turn, and pray to thee in the land of their captivity: If they return to thee with all*

their hearts, and pray toward the land which thou gavest to their forefathers, &c. Then, hear thou from heaven their prayer, and their supplication; 2 Chron. vi. 36—39.

Art thou bereaved of thy bodily senses? Make thy address to him, that said, *Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, and the deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I, the Lord?* Exod. iv. 11. Cry aloud to him, with Bartimeus, *Lord, that I may receive my sight;* Matt. x. 47, 51. And, if thou be hopeless of thine outward sight, yet pray, with the Psalmist, *O Lord, open thou mine eyes, that I may see the wondrous things of thy Law;* Ps. cxix. 18.

Art thou afflicted with sterility? Pray. So did Isaac; Gen. xxv. 21. So did Hannah: *she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the Lord, and wept sore;* and received a gracious answer; 1 Sam. i. 10. ii. 21.

Art thou troubled and weakened with want of rest? Pray. So did Asaph: *I complained, and my spirit was overwhelmed. Thou holdest mine eyes waking: I am so troubled, that I cannot speak;* Ps. lxxvii. 3, 4. *I cried to God with my voice; unto God with my voice, and he gave ear unto me;* v. 1.

Dost thou droop under the grievances of old age? Pray. So did David: *Oh, cast me not off in the time of old age: forsake me not, when my strength faileth;* Ps. lxxi. 9. *O God, thou hast taught me from my youth: Now also, when I am old and grey-headed, O God, forsake me not;* vv. 17, 18.

Art thou troubled and dismayed with the fears of death? Pray. So did David: *My soul is full of troubles; and my life draweth nigh unto the grave. I am counted with them, that go down into the pit: I am as a man, that hath no strength. Free among the dead: thou hast laid me in the lowest pit, in darkness, in the deeps;* Ps. lxxxviii. 3—6. *But unto thee have I cried, O Lord; and, in the morning, shall my prayer prevent thee;* v. 13.

Dost thou tremble at the thought of judgment? So did the man after God's own heart: *My flesh trembleth for fear of thee; and I am afraid of thy judgments;* Ps. cxix. 120. Look up, with Jeremiah, and say to thy Saviour, *O Lord, thou hast pleaded the causes of my soul; thou hast redeemed my life: O Lord, judge thou my cause;* Lam. iii. 58, 59.

Lastly, art thou afraid of the power, malice, subtlety of thy spiritual enemies? Pray. So did David: *Deliver me from mine enemies, O my God: defend me from them, that rise up against me;* Ps. lix. 1. *Oh, hide me from the secret counsel of the wicked;* Ps. lxiv. 2. *Consider mine enemies; for they are many, and they hate me with cruel hatred. Oh, keep my soul, and deliver me;* Ps. xxv. 19, 20. So did St. Paul pray, that he might be freed from the messenger of Satan, whose buffets he felt; and was answered with, *My grace is sufficient for thee;* 2 Cor. xii. 9. So he sues for all God's Saints: *May the God of Peace tread down Satan under your feet shortly;* Rom. xvi. 20.

Shortly, whatever evil it be that presseth thy soul, have speedy

recourse to the Throne of Grace: pour out thy heart into the ears of *the Father of all Mercies, and God of all Comfort;* and be sure, if not of redress, yet of ease: We have his word for it, that cannot fail us: *Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee; and thou shalt glorify me;* Ps. l. 15.

Fashionable suppliants may talk to God: but, be confident, he, that can truly pray, can never be truly miserable. Of ourselves, we lie open to all evils: our rescue is from above: and what intercourse have we with heaven, but by our Prayers? Our Prayers are they, that can deliver us from dangers, avert judgments, prevent mischiefs, procure blessings; that can obtain pardon for our sins, furnish us with strength against temptations, mitigate the extremity of our sufferings, sustain our infirmities, raise up our dejectedness, increase our graces, abate our corruptions, sanctify all good things to us, sweeten the bitterness of our afflictions, open the windows of heaven, shut up the bars of death, vanquish the power of hell. Pray; and be both safe and happy.

A

TREATISE

OF

CHRIST MYSTICAL:

OR

THE BLESSED UNION

OF

CHRIST AND HIS MEMBERS.

BY JOSEPH, BISHOP OF NORWICH.

TO THE

ONLY HONOUR AND GLORY

OF HIS BLESSED SAVIOUR AND REDEEMER:

AND TO THE COMFORT AND BENEFIT OF ALL THOSE MEMBERS OF

HIS MYSTICAL BODY, WHICH ARE STILL LABOURING

AND WARFARING UPON EARTH;

JOSEPH HALL,

THEIR UNWORTHIEST SERVANT, HUMBLY DEDICATES

THIS FRUIT OF HIS OLD AGE.

CHRIST MYSTICAL.

CHAP. I.

INTRODUCTORY.

SECT. I.

How to be happy in the apprehending of Christ.

THERE is not so much need of learning as of grace, to apprehend those things, which concern our everlasting peace. Neither is it our brain, that must be set on work here; but our heart: for true happiness doth not consist in a mere speculation, but a fruition of good. However, therefore, there is excellent use of scholarship in all the sacred employments of Divinity; yet in the main act, which imports salvation, skill must give place to affection. Happy is the soul, that is possessed of Christ, how poor soever in all inferior endowments.

Ye are wide, O ye great wits, while you spend yourselves in curious questions, and learned extravagancies. Ye shall find one touch of Christ more worth to your souls, than all your deep and laboursome disquisitions: one dram of faith more precious than a pound of knowledge. In vain shall ye seek for this in your books, if you miss it in your bosoms. If you know all things, and cannot truly say, *I know whom I have believed,* (2 Tim. i. 12.) you have but knowledge enough to know yourselves truly miserable.

Wouldst thou, therefore, my son, find true and solid comfort in the hour of temptation, in the agony of death? make sure work for thy soul, in the days of thy peace. Find Christ thine; and, in the despite of hell, thou art both safe and blessed.

Look not so much to an Absolute Deity, infinitely and incomprehensibly glorious: alas, that Majesty, because perfectly and essentially good, is, out of Christ, no other than an enemy to thee. Thy sin hath offended his justice, which is himself: what hast thou to do with that dreadful power, which thou hast provoked?

Look to that merciful and all-sufficient *Mediator betwixt God and man,* who is both God and Man, *Jesus Christ the righteous;* 1 Tim. ii. 5. 1 John ii. 1. It is his charge, and our duty, *Ye believe in God, believe also in me;* John xiv. 1.

Yet look not merely to the Lord Jesus, as considered in the notion of his own eternal being, as the Son of God, co-equal and co-essential to God the Father: but look upon him, as he stands in reference to the sons of men. And, herein also, look not to him so much, as a Lawgiver and a Judge; there is terror in such apprehension: but look upon him, as a gracious Saviour and Advocate *. And, lastly, look not upon him, as in the generality of his mercy, the common Saviour of Mankind: what comfort were it to thee, that all the world except thyself were saved? but look upon him, as the dear Redeemer of thy soul; as thine Advocate, at the right-hand of Majesty; as one, with whom thou art, through his wonderful mercy, inseparably united.

Thus look upon him, firmly and fixedly; so as he may never be out of thine eyes: and, whatever secular objects interpose themselves betwixt thee and him, look through them, as some slight mists; and terminate thy sight still in this blessed prospect. Let neither earth nor heaven hide them from thee, in whatsoever condition.

SECT. 2.

The honour and happiness of being united to Christ.

And, while thou art thus taken up, see if thou canst, without wonder and a kind of ecstatical amazement, behold the infinite goodness of thy God, that hath exalted thy wretchedness to no less than a blessed and indivisible union with the Lord of Glory: so as thou, who, in the sense of thy miserable mortality, mayest say *to corruption, thou art my father; and to the worm, thou art my mother and my sister;* Job xvii. 14. canst now, through the privilege of thy faith, hear the Son of God say unto thee, *Thou art bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh;* Gen. ii. 23. Eph. v. 30.

Surely, as we are too much subject to pride ourselves, in these earthly glories; so we are too apt, through ignorance or pusillanimity, to undervalue ourselves in respect of our spiritual condition: we are far more noble and excellent than we account ourselves.

It is our faith, that must raise our thoughts to a due estimation of our greatness; and must shew us how highly we are descended, how royally we are allied, how gloriously estated. That only is it, that must advance us to heaven, and bring heaven down to us: through the want of the exercise whereof it comes to pass, that, to the great prejudice of our souls, we are ready to think of Christ Jesus as a stranger to us; as one, aloof off in another world, apprehended only by fits in a kind of ineffectual speculation, without any lively feeling of our own interest in him; whereas, we ought, by the powerful operation of this grace in our hearts, to find so heavenly an appropriation of Christ to our souls, as that every believer may truly say, "I am one with Christ: Christ is one with me."

* Luther. in Gal.

Had we not good warrant for so high a challenge, it could be no less than a blasphemous arrogance, to lay claim to the royal blood of heaven: but, since it hath pleased the God of Heaven so far to dignify our unworthiness, as, in the multitude of his mercies, to admit and allow us to be *partakers of the divine nature*, (2 Pet. i. 4.) it were no other than an unthankful stupidity, not to lay hold on so glorious a privilege, and to go for less than God hath made us.

CHAP. II.

THE KIND AND MANNER OF THIS UNION WITH CHRIST.

KNOW now, my son, that thou art upon the ground of all consolation to thy soul; which consists in this beatifical union with thy God and Saviour.

Think not, therefore, to pass over this important mystery, with some transient and perfunctory glances: but let thy heart dwell upon it; as that, which must stick by thee in all extremities, and cheer thee up when thou art forsaken of all worldly comforts.

Do not then conceive of this union, as some imaginary thing, that hath no other being but in the brain; whose faculties have power to apprehend and bring home to itself far remote substances; possessing itself, in a sort, of whatsoever it conceives. Do not think it an union merely virtual, by the participation of those spiritual gifts and graces which God worketh in the soul, as the comfortable effects of our happy conjunction with Christ. Do not think it an accidental union, in respect of some circumstances and qualities, wherein we communicate with him, who is God and Man: nor yet a metaphorical union, by way of figurative resemblance.

But know, that this is a true, real, essential, substantial union, whereby the person of the believer is indissolubly united to the glorious person of the Son of God. Know, that this union is not more mystical than certain; that in natural unions there may be more evidence, there cannot be more truth. Neither is there so firm and close an union betwixt the soul and body, as there is betwixt Christ and the believing soul; forasmuch as that may be severed by death, but this never.

Away yet with all gross carnality of conceit. This union is true, and really existent; but yet spiritual. And, if some of the ancients have termed it natural and bodily, it hath been in respect to the subject united; our Humanity to the two blessed natures of the Son of God, met in one most glorious person: not in respect of the manner of the uniting.

Neither is it the less real, because spiritual. Spiritual agents neither have nor put forth any whit less virtue, because sense cannot discern their manner of working. Even the loadstone, though an

earthen substance, yet, when it is out of sight, whether under the table or behind a solid partition, stirreth the needle as effectually as if it were within view: shall not he contradict his senses, that will say, "It cannot work, because I see it not?"

O Saviour, thou art more mine, than my body is mine. My sense feels that present; but so, that I must lose it: my faith sees and feels thee so present with me, that I shall never be parted from thee.

CHAP. III.

THE RESEMBLANCES OF THIS UNION.

SECT. 1.

The resemblance of this union, by the Head and Body.

THERE is no resemblance, whereby the Spirit of God more delights to set forth the heavenly union betwixt Christ and the believer, than that of THE HEAD AND THE BODY.

The head gives sense and motion to all the members of the body: and the body is one, not only by the continuity of all the parts held together with the same natural ligaments, and covered with one and the same skin; but much more by the animation of the same soul quickening that whole frame.

In the acting whereof, it is not the large extent of the stature, and distance of the limbs from each other, that can make any difference. The body of a child, that is but a span long, cannot be said to be more united, than the vast body of a giantly son of Anak, whose height is as the cedars; and, if we could suppose such a body as high as heaven itself, that one soul, which dwells in it and is diffused through all the parts of it, would make it but one entire body.

Right so it is with Christ and his Church. That one Spirit of his, which dwells in and enlivens every believer, unites all those far-distant members, both to each other and to their head; and makes them up into one true mystical body: so as now, every true believer may, without presumption, but with all holy reverence and humble thankfulness, say to his God and Saviour, "Behold, Lord, I am, how unworthy soever, one of the limbs of thy body; and therefore have a right to all that thou hast, to all that thou doest: thine eyes see for me: thine ears hear for me: thy hand acts for me: thy life, thy grace, thy happiness is mine."

Oh, the wonder of the two blessed unions! In the personal union, it pleased God to assume and unite our human nature to the Deity: in the spiritual and mystical, it pleases God to unite

the person of every believer to the person of the Son of God. Our souls are too narrow to bless God enough for these incomprehensible mercies; mercies, wherein he hath preferred us, be it spoken with all godly lowliness, to the blessed angels of heaven: *For, verily, he took not upon him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham;* Heb. ii. 16. Neither hath he made those glorious spirits members of his mystical body; but his Saints, whom he hath, as it were, so incorporated, that they are become his body and he theirs, according to that of the divine Apostle, *For, as the body is one and hath many members, and all the members of that one body being many are one body, so also is Christ;* 1 Cor. xii. 12.

SECT. 2.

This union set forth, by the resemblance of the Husband and Wife.

NEXT hereunto, there is no resemblance of this mystery, either more frequent or more full of lively expression, than that of THE CONJUGAL UNION BETWIXT THE HUSBAND AND WIFE.

Christ is, as the Head, so the Husband of the Church: the Church and every believing soul is the Spouse of this Heavenly Bridegroom; whom he marrieth unto himself *for ever, in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies;* Isa. lxii. 5. Hos. ii. 19.

And this match, thus made up, fulfils that decretive word of the Almighty, *They twain shall be one flesh;* Eph. v. 31. Gen. ii. 24.

Oh, happy conjunction of the Second Adam, with her, which was taken out of his most precious side! Oh, heavenly and complete marriage! wherein God, the Father, brings and gives the Bride; Gen. ii. 22. *All, that the Father giveth me, shall come to me,* saith Christ; John vi. 37: wherein God, the Son, receives the Bride, as mutually partaking of the same nature; and can say, *This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh;* John i. 14. Gen. ii. 23: wherein God, the Holy Ghost, knits our wills in a full and glad consent, to the full consummation of this blessed wedlock.

And those, whom God hath thus joined together, let no man (no devil can) put asunder.

What is there then, which an affectionate husband can withhold from a dear wife? He, that hath given himself to her, what can he deny to impart? He, that hath made himself one with her, how can he be divided from his other self? Some wild fancies there are, that have framed the links of marriage of so brittle stuff, as that they may be snapt in sunder upon every slight occasion; but he, that ordained it in paradise for an earthly representation of this heavenly union betwixt Christ and his Church, hath made that and his own indissoluble.

Here is no contract in the future, which, upon some intervenient

accidents, may be remitted; but, *I am my well-beloved's, and my well-beloved is mine*; Cant. vi. 3. ii. 16: and, therefore, each is so other's, that neither of them is their own.

Oh, the comfortable mystery of our uniting to the Son of God! *The wife hath not the power of her own body, but the husband*; 1 Cor. vii. 4. We are at thy disposing, O Saviour: we are not our own. Neither art thou so absolutely thine, as that we may not, through thine infinite mercy, claim an interest in thee. Thou hast given us such a right in thyself, as that we are bold to lay challenge to all that is thine; to thy love, to thy merits, to thy blessings, to thy glory. It was wont of old, to be the plea of the Roman wives to their husbands, "Where thou art Caius, I am Caia:" and now, in our present marriages, we have not stuck to say, "With all my worldly goods I thee endow." And, if it be thus in our imperfect conjunctions here upon earth, how much more in that exquisite Oneness, which is betwixt thee, O Blessed Saviour, and thy dearest Spouse the Church!

What is it then, that can hinder us from a sweet and heavenly fruition of thee?

Is it the loathsome condition of our nature? thou sawest this before; and yet couldst say, *when we were yet in our blood, Live*; Ezek. xvi. 6. Had we not been so vile, thy mercy had not been so glorious. Thy free grace did all for us: *Thou washedst us with water, and anointedst us with oil, and clothedst us with broidered work, and girdedst us about with fine linen, and coveredst us with silk, and deckedst us with ornaments; and didst put bracelets upon our hands, and a chain on our neck, and jewels on our foreheads, and earrings on our ears, a beautiful crown on our heads*; Ezek. xvi. 9—12. What we had not, thou gavest: what thou didst not find, thou madest; that we might be a not-unmeet match for the Lord of Life.

Is it want of beauty? *Behold, I am black, but comely*; Cant. i. 5. Whatever our hue be in our own or others' eyes, it is enough, that we are lovely in thine. *Behold, thou art fair, my beloved: behold, thou art fair, yea pleasant*; Cant. i. 16. *Thou art beautiful, O my love, as Tirzah; comely, as Jerusalem*; vi. 4. *How fair and how pleasant art thou, O love, for delights!* vii. 6. But, O Saviour, if thou take contentment in this poor unperfect beauty of thy Spouse the Church, how infinite pleasure should thy Spouse take in that absolute perfection that is in thee, who art all loveliness and glory! and, if she have ravished thy heart with one of her eyes; Cant. v. 16. iv. 9: how much more reason hath her heart to be wholly ravished with both thine, which are so full of grace and amiableness! and, in this mutual fruition, what can there be, other than perfect blessedness?

SECT. 3.

The resemblance of this union, by the Nourishment and the Body.

The Spirit of God, well knowing how much it imports us both to know and feel this blessed union, whereof himself is the only worker, labours to set it forth to us by the representations of many of our familiar concernments, which we daily find in our meats and drinks, in our houses, in our gardens and orchards.

That, which is nearest to us, is our NOURISHMENT. What can be more evident, than that the bread, the meat, the drink, that we receive, is incorporated into us, and becomes part of the substance whereof we consist? So as, after perfect digestion, there can be no distinction, betwixt what we are and what we took. While that bread was in the bin, and that meat in the shambles, and that drink in the vessel, it had no relation to us, nor we to it: yea, while all these were on the table, yea, in our mouths, yea, newly let down into our stomachs, they are not fully ours; for, upon some nauseating dislike of nature, they may yet go the same way they came. But if the concoction be once fully finished, now they are so turned into our blood and flesh, that they can be no more distinguished from our former substance, than that could be divided from itself: now, they are dispersed into the veins, and concorporated to the flesh; and no part of our flesh and blood is more ours, than that, which was lately the blood of the grapes, and the flesh of this fowl or that beast.

O Saviour, thou, who art Truth itself, hast said, *I am the living bread, that came down from heaven*; John vi. 51: *My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed*; v. 55: and, thereupon, hast most justly inferred, *He, that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him*; v. 56: and, as a necessary consequent of this spiritual manducation, *Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life*; v. 54.

Lo, thou art Bread indeed: not the common bread; but Manna: not the Israelitish manna; alas, that fell from no higher than the region of clouds, and they that eat it died with it in their mouths; but thou art the Living Bread, that came down from the heaven of heavens, of whom whosoever eats, lives for ever. Thy flesh is meat; not for our stomachs, but for our souls: our faith receives and digests thee; and makes thee ours, and us thine.

Our material food, in these corruptible bodies, runs into corruption: thy spiritual food nourisheth purely, and strengthens us to a blessed immortality.

As for this material food, many a one longs for it, that cannot get it: many a one hath it, that cannot eat it: many eat it, that cannot digest it: many digest it into noxious and corrupt humours: all, that receive it, do but maintain a perishing life, if not a languishing death. But this flesh of thine, as it was never withheld from any true appetite, so it never yields but wholesome and com-

fortable sustenance to the soul; never hath any other issue, than an everlasting life and happiness.

O Saviour, whensoever I sit at mine own table, let me think of thine: whensoever I feed on the bread and meat that is set before me, and feel myself nourished by that repast, let me mind that better sustenance, which my soul receives from thee; and find thee more one with me, than that bodily food.

SECT. 4.

This union resembled, by the Branch and the Stock.

LOOK but into thy garden, or orchard; and see the vine, or any other fruit-bearing tree, how it grows and fructifies. The BRANCHES are loaden with increase: whence is this, but that they are one with the STOCK; and the stock one with the root? Were either of these severed, the plant were barren and dead. The branch hath not sap enough to maintain life in itself, unless it receive it from the body of the tree; nor that, unless it derived it from the root; nor that, unless it were cherished by the earth.

Lo; *I am the vine*, saith our Saviour, *ye are the branches: He, that abideth in me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered*; John xv. 5, 6. Were the branch and the body of the tree of different substances, and only closed together in some artificial contiguity, no fruit could be expected from it: it is only the abiding in the tree as a living limb of that plant, which yields it the benefit and issue of vegetation. No otherwise is it betwixt Christ and his Church: the bough and the tree are not more of one piece, than we are of one substance with our Saviour; and, branching out from him, and receiving the sap of heavenly virtue from his precious root, we cannot but be acceptably fruitful.

But, if the analogy seem not to be so full: for that the branch issues naturally from the tree, and the fruit from the branch, whereas we by nature have no part in the Son of God: take that clearer resemblance, which the Apostle fetches from the stock and the graff, or scion. The branches of the wild olive (Rom. xi.) are cut off, and are graffed with choice scions of the good olive. Those imps grow; and are now, by this incision, no less embodied in that stock, than if they had sprouted out by a natural propagation; neither can be any more separated from it, than the strongest bough that nature puts forth. In the mean time, that scion alters the nature of that stock; and, while the root gives fatness to the stock, and the stock yields juice to the scion, the scion gives goodness to the plant, and a specification to the fruit: so as, while the imp is now the same thing with the stock, the tree is different from what it was.

So it is, betwixt Christ and the believing soul. Old Adam is our

wild stock: what could that have yielded, but either none, or sour fruit? We are imped with the new man, Christ, that is now incorporated into us. We are become one with him. Our nature is not more ours, than he is ours by grace. Now we bear his fruit, and not our own: our old stock is forgotten: all things are become new. Our natural life we receive from Adam; our spiritual life and growth from Christ: from whom, after the improvement of this blessed incision, we can be no more severed, than he can be severed from himself.

SECT. 5.

The resemblance of this union, by the Foundation and the Building.

LOOK but upon thy house (that, from vegetative creatures, thou mayest turn thine eyes to those things which have no life): if that be uniform, the FOUNDATION is not of a different matter from the WALLS: both those are but one piece: the superstructure is so raised upon the foundation, as if all were but one stone.

Behold, Christ is the *chief corner-stone, elect* and *precious;* 1 Pet. ii. 6: neither can there be *any other foundation laid, than that which is laid* on him; 1 Cor. iii. 11. We are *lively stones, built up to a spiritual house,* on that sure and firm foundation; 1 Pet. ii. 5.

Some loose stones perhaps, that lie unmortered upon the battlements, may be easily shaken down; but who ever saw a squared marble, laid by line and level in a strong wall upon a well-grounded base, fly out of his place by whatsoever violence; since, both the strength of the foundation below, and the weight of the fabric above, have settled it in a posture utterly unmoveable? Such is our spiritual condition. O Saviour, thou art our foundation: we are laid upon thee; and are, therein, one with thee. We can no more be disjoined from thy foundation, than the stones of thy foundation can be disunited from themselves.

So then, to sum up all; as the head and members are but one body, as the husband and wife are but one flesh, as our meat and drink become part of ourselves, as the tree and branches are but one plant, as the foundation and walls are but one fabric; so Christ and the believing soul are indivisibly one with each other.

CHAP IV.

THE CERTAINTY AND INDISSOLUBLENESS OF THIS UNION.

WHERE are those then, that go about to divide Christ from himself; Christ real, from Christ mystical? yielding Christ one with himself, but not one with his Church; making the true Believer no less separable from his Saviour, than from the entireness of his own obe-

dience; dreaming of the uncomfortable and self-contradicting paradoxes of the total and final apostasy of Saints.

Certainly, these men have never thoroughly digested the meditation of this blessed union, whereof we treat:

Can they hold the believing soul a limb of that body, whereof Christ is the Head, and yet imagine a possibility of dissolution? Can they affeign to the Son of God a body, that is imperfect? Can they think that body perfect, that hath lost his limbs? Even in this mystical body, the best joints may be subject to strains; yea, perhaps, to some painful and perilous luxation: but, as it was in the natural body of Christ, when it was in death most exposed to the cruelty of all enemies, that, upon an over-ruling providence, not a bone of it could be broken; so it is still and ever with the spiritual: some scourgings and blows it may suffer; yea, perhaps some bruises and gashes; but no bone can be shattered in pieces, much less dissevered from the rest of the body. Were we left to ourselves, or could we be so much as in conceit sundered from the body whereof we are, alas! we are but as other men, subject to the same sinful infirmities, to the same dangerous and deadly miscarriages: but, since it hath pleased the God of Heaven to unite us to himself, now it concerns him to maintain the honour of his own body by preserving us entire.

Can they acknowledge the faithful soul married in truth and righteousness to that Celestial Husband, and made up into one flesh with the Lord of Glory; and can they think of any bills of divorce written in heaven? Can they suppose that, which, by way of type, was done in the earthly paradise, to be really undone in the heavenly? What an infinite power hath put together, can they imagine that a limited power can disjoin? Can they think sin can be of more prevalence, than mercy? Can they think the unchangeable God subject to after-thoughts? Even the Jewish repudiations never found favour in heaven: they were permitted as a lesser evil to avoid a greater, never allowed as good; neither had so much as that toleration ever been, if the hard-heartedness and cruelty of that people had not enforced it upon Moses, in a prevention of further mischief: what place can this find with a God, in whom there is an infinite tenderness of love and mercy? No time can be any check to his gracious choice: the inconstant minds of us men may alter upon slight dislikes: our God is ever himself; *Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever;* Heb. xiii. 8: *with* him *there is no variableness, nor shadow of turning;* James i. 17. Divorces were ever grounded upon hatred; Mal. ii. 16: *No man,* saith the Apostle, *ever yet hated his own flesh;* Eph. v. 29: much less shall God do so, who is love itself; 1 John iv. 16. His love, and our union, is, like himself, everlasting: *Having loved his own,* saith the Disciple of Love, *which were in the world, he loved them to the end;* John xiii. 1. He, that hates putting away (Mal. ii. 16.) can never act it: so as, in this relation, we are indissoluble.

Can they have received that *Bread which came down from heaven,*

and *flesh* which *is meat indeed*, and that *blood* which *is drink indeed*; can their souls have digested it by a lively faith, and converted themselves into it, and it into themselves; and can they now think it can be severed from their own substance?

Can they find themselves truly ingrafted in the Tree of Life, and grown into one body with that heavenly plant, and as a living branch of that tree bearing pleasant and wholesome fruit acceptable to God (Rev. xxii. 2.) and beneficial to men; and can they look upon themselves, as some withered bough, fit only for the fire?

Can they lay themselves living stones, surely laid upon the Foundation, Jesus Christ, to the making up of a heavenly temple for the eternal inhabitation of God; and can they think they can be shaken out with every storm of temptation?

Have these men ever taken into their serious thoughts that divine prayer and meditation, which our Blessed Redeemer, now at the point of his death, left for a happy farewell to his Church, in every word whereof there is a heaven of comfort? *Neither pray I for these alone; but for them also, which shall believe in me through their word: That they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee; that they also may be one with us: And the glory, that thou gavest me, I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one; I in them, and thou in me;* John xvii. 20, 21, 22. O heavenly consolation! O indefeasible assurance! what room can there be now here, for our diffidence? Can the Son of God pray, and not be heard? For himself, he needs not pray; as being eternally one with the Father, *God blessed for ever:* he prays for his; and his prayer is, That they may be one with the Father and him, even as they are one. They cannot, therefore, but be partakers of this blessed union; and, being partakers of it, they cannot be dissevered. And, to make sure work, that glory, which the Father gave to the Son of his Love, they are already, through his gracious participation, prepossessed of: here they have begun to enter upon that heaven, from which none of the powers of hell can possibly eject them. Oh, the unspeakably happy condition of believers! Oh, that all the Saints of God, in a comfortable sense of their inchoate blessedness, could sing for joy; and here, beforehand, begin to take up those Hallelujahs, which they shall, ere long, continue, and never end, in the Choir of the Highest Heaven!

CHAP. V.

THE PRIVILEGES AND BENEFITS OF THIS UNION.

HAVING now taken a view of this blessed union, in the Nature and Resemblances of it; it will be time to bend thine eyes upon those most advantageous Consequents and high Privileges, which do necessarily follow upon and attend this heavenly conjunction.

SECT. 1.

The first of these benefits—Life: wherein, (1.) *A complaint of our Insensibleness of this mercy; and an excitation to a cheerful Recognition of it;*—(2.) *An incitement to Joy and Thankfulness for Christ, our Life;*—(3.) *The Duties we owe to God for his mercy to us, in this Life which we have from Christ;*—(4.) *The Improvement of this Life; in that Christ is made,* [1.] *Our Wisdom;* [2.] *Our Righteousness;* [3.] *Our Sanctification;* [4.] *Our Redemption.*

WHEREOF the first is that, which we are wont to account sweetest, LIFE.

Not this natural life, which is maintained by the breath of our nostrils. Alas, what is that, but a bubble, a vapour, a shadow, a dream, nothing? as it is the gift of a good God, worthy to be esteemed precious; but, as it is considered in its own transitoriness and appendent miseries, and in comparison of a better life, not worthy to take up our hearts.

This life of nature is that, which ariseth from the union of the body with the soul, many times enjoyed upon hard terms; the spiritual life which we now speak of, arising from the union betwixt God and the soul, is that, wherein there can be nothing but perfect contentment, and *joy unspeakable and full of glory.*

Yea, this is that life, which Christ not only gives, but is: He, that gave himself for us, and is that life that he gives us: *When Christ, which is our life, shall appear,* saith the Apostle; Col. iii. 4: and, *Christ is to me, to live;* Phil. i. 21: and, most emphatically, *I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless, I live; yet, not I, but Christ liveth in me;* Gal. ii. 20. Lo, it is a common favour, that in him we live; but it is an especial favour to his own, that he lives in us: *Know you not your ownselves,* saith the Apostle, *how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?* 2 Cor. xiii. 5: and wheresoever he is, there he lives. We have not a dead Saviour, but a living; and, where he lives, he animates. It is not, therefore, St. Paul's case alone: it is every believer's; who may truly say, *I live; yet, not I, but Christ liveth in me.*

Now how these lives and the authors of them are distinguished, is worth thy carefullest consideration.

Know then, my son, that every faithful man's bosom is a Rebekah's womb, (Gen. xxv. 22.) wherein there are twins: a rough Esau, and the seed of promise; the old man, and the new; the flesh, and the spirit.

And these have their lives distinct from each other: the new man lives not the life of the old; neither can the old man live the life of the new: it is not one life, that could maintain the opposite strugglings of both these: corrupt nature is it, that gives and continues the life of the old man; it is Christ, that gives life to the new.

We cannot say, but the old man or flesh is the man too; for, *I know*, saith the Chosen Vessel, *that in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing;* Rom. vii. 18: but the spiritual part may yet better challenge the title; for, *I delight in the Law of God, after the inward man;* v. 22.

That old man of ours is derived from the First Adam: as we sinned in him, so he liveth in us. The Second Adam both gives and is the life of our regeneration, like as he is also the life of our glory; the life, that follows our second resurrection: *I am*, saith he, *the resurrection and the life.*

What is it then, whereby the new creature lives? surely no other, than the Spirit of Christ: that alone is it, that gives being and life to the renewed soul.

Life is no stranger to us: there is nothing, wherewith we are so well acquainted; yea, we feel continually what it is, and what it produceth. It is that, from whence all sense, action, motion floweth: it is that, which gives us to be what we are.

All this is Christ to the regenerate man. It is one thing, what he is or doth, as a Man; another thing, what he is or doth, as a Christian: as a Man, he hath eyes, ears, motions, affections, understanding, naturally as his own; as a Christian, he hath all these from him, with whom he is spiritually one, the Lord Jesus.

And the objects of all these vary accordingly. His natural eyes behold bodily and material things: his spiritual eyes see things invisible. His outward ears hear the sound of the voice: his inward ears hear the voice of God's Spirit speaking to his soul. His bodily feet move in his own secular ways: his spiritual walk with God in all the ways of his commandments. His natural affections are set upon those things which are agreeable thereunto; he loves beauty, fears pain and loss, rejoices in outward prosperity, hates an enemy: his renewed affections are otherwise and more happily bestowed; now he loves goodness for its own sake, hates nothing but sin, fears only the displeasure of a good God, rejoices in God's favour which is better than life. His former thoughts were altogether taken up with vanity, and earthed in the world: now, he *seeks the things above, where Christ sitteth at the right-hand of God;* Col. iii. 1.

Finally, he is such, as that a beholder sees nothing but man in him: but God and his soul find Christ in him; both in his renewed person and actions; in all the degrees, both of his life and growth, of his sufferings and glory: *My little children*, saith St. Paul, *of whom I travail in birth again, until Christ be formed in you;* Gal. iv. 19.

Lo here Christ both conceived and born in the faithful heart. Formation follows conception, and travail implies a birth. Now the believer is a *new-born babe* in Christ; 1 Cor. iii. 1. 1 Pet. ii. 2. and so, mutually, Christ in him. From thence he grows up to strength of *youth;* 1 John ii. 14: and, at last, to *perfection;* even towards *the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ;* Eph. iv. 13. 2 Cor. xiii. 9. Heb. vi. 1. And, in this condition, he is *dead with Christ;* Rom. vi. 8: he is *buried with Christ;* v. 4: he is *alive again*

unto God through Christ; v. 11: he is *risen with Christ;* Col. iii. 1: and, *with Christ*, he is *glorified;* Rom. viii. 17: yea, yet more than so, his sufferings are his; Col. i. 24: he is, *in Christ*, *an heir of glory;* Rom. viii. 17: and *Christ* is, *in* him, *the hope of glory;* Col. i. 27.

(1.) Dost thou not now find cause, my son, *to complain of thyself;* as I confess, I daily do: *that thou art so miserably apt to forget these intimate respects between thy Christ and thee?* Art thou not ashamed to think, how little sense thou hast had of thy great happiness?

Lo, Christ is in thy bosom; and thou feelest him not! It is not thy soul, that animates thee in thy renewed estate: it is thy God and Saviour; and thou hast not hitherto perceived it.

It is no otherwise with thee in this case, than with the members of thine own body. There is the same life in thy fingers and toes, that there is in the head or heart; yea, in the whole man: and yet those limbs know not, that they have such a life. Had those members reason as well as sense, they would perceive that, wherewith they are enlivened: thou hast, more than reason, faith; and, therefore, mayest well know whence thou hast this spiritual life; and, therenpon, art much wanting to thyself, if thou dost not enjoy so useful and comfortable an apprehension.

Resolve, therefore, with thyself, that no secular occasion shall ever set off thy heart from this blessed object; and that thou wilt as soon forget thy natural life, as this spiritual: and raise up thy thoughts from this dust, to the heaven of heavens. Shake off this natural pusillanimity; and mean conceit of thyself, as if thou wert all earth: and know thyself advanced to a celestial condition; that thou art united to the Son of God, and animated by the Holy Spirit of God: so as *the life*, *which* thou now *livest in the flesh*, thou *livest by the faith of the Son of God*, *who loved* thee *and gave himself for* thee; Gal. ii. 20.

See then and confess, how just cause we have *to condemn the dead-heartedness*, *wherewith we are subject to be possessed:* and how many worthy Christians are there in the world, who bear a part with us in this just blame; who have yielded over themselves to a disconsolate heartlessness and a sad dejection of spirit, partly through a natural disposition inclining to dumpishness, and partly through the prevalence of temptation: for Satan, well knowing how much it makes for our happiness cheerfully to reflect upon our interest in Christ and to live in the joyful sense of it, labours, by all means, to withdraw our hearts from this so comfortable object, and to clog us with a pensive kind of spiritual sullenness; accounting it no small mastery, if he can prevail with us so far as to bereave us of this habitual joy in the Holy Ghost, arising from the inanimation of Christ living and breathing within us.

So much the more, therefore, must we bend all the powers of our souls, against this dangerous and deadly machination of our spiritual enemy; labour, as for life, to maintain this fort of our joy, against all the powers of darkness; and if, at any time, we find ourselves beaten off, through the violence of temptation, we must

chide ourselves into our renewed valour, and expostulate the matter with our shrinking courage, with the man after God's own heart, *Why art thou cast down, O my soul; and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance and my God*; Ps. xlii. 11. xliii. 5.

(2.) Neither is here more place for a heavenly joy, than for *height of spirit, and raptures of admiration* at that infinite goodness and mercy of our God; who hath vouchsafed so far to grace his elect as to honour them with a special inhabitation of his Ever-Blessed Deity; yea, to live in them, and to make them live mutually in and to himself.

What capacity is there in the narrow heart of man, to conceive of this incomprehensible favour to his poor creature? O Saviour, this is no small part of that great mystery, whereinto *the angels desire to look* (1 Pet. i. 12.), and can never look to the bottom of it: how shall the weak eyes of sinful flesh ever be able to reach unto it?

When thou, in the estate of thy human infirmity, offeredst to go down to the centurion's house, that humble commander could say, *Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof*: what shall we then say, that thou, in the state of thy heavenly glory, shouldest vouchsafe to come down and dwell with us in these houses of clay, and to make our breasts *the temples of thy Holy Ghost*? 1 Cor. vi. 19.

When thy Holy Mother came to visit the partner of her joy, thy forerunner, then in the womb of his mother, sprang for the joy of thy presence, though distemined by a second womb; Luke i. 44: how should we be affected with a ravishment of spirit, whom thou hast pleased to visit in so much mercy, as to come down into us, and to be spiritually conceived in the womb of our hearts; and, thereby, to give a new and spiritual life to our poor souls; a life of thine own, yet made ours; a life begun in grace, and ending in eternal glory!

(3.) Never did the Holy God give a privilege, where he did not expect a duty. He hath more respect to his glory, than to throw away his favours. The life, that ariseth from this blessed union of our souls with Christ, as it is the height of all his mercies; so it *calls for our most zealous affections, and most effectual improvement.*

Art thou then thus happily united to Christ, and thus enlived by Christ? how entire must thou needs be with him! how dear must thy valuations be of him! how heartily must thou be devoted to him! *The spirit of man*, saith wise Solomon, *is the candle of the Lord, searching all the inward parts of the belly*; Prov. xx. 27: and therefore cannot but be acquainted with his own inmates; and, finding so heavenly a guest as the Spirit of Christ in the secret lodgings of his soul, applies itself to him in all things: so as these two Spirits agree in all their spiritual concernments; *The Spirit itself*, saith the holy Apostle, *beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God*; Rom. viii. 16. And not in this case only, but upon whatsoever occasion, the faithful man hath this *Urim* in his breast; and may consult with this inward Oracle of his God for di-

rection, and resolution in all his doubts: neither can he, according to the counsel of the Psalmist (Ps. iv. 4.), commune with his own heart, but that Christ, who lives there, is ready to give him an answer. Shortly, our souls and we are one, and the soul and life are so near one, that the one is commonly taken for the other: Christ therefore, who is the life and soul of our souls, is, and needs must be, so intrinsical to us, that we cannot so much as conceive of our spiritual being without him.

Thou needest not be told, my son, how much thou valuest life. Besides thine own sense, Satan himself can tell thee, and in this case thou mayest believe him, *Skin for skin, and all that a man hath will he give for his life;* Job ii. 4. What ransom can be set upon it, that a man would stick to give? though mountains of gold; Ps. xlix. 7: though thousands of rams, or ten thousand rivers of oil; Micah vi. 7. Yea, how readily do we expose our dear limbs, not to hazard only but to loss, for the preservation of it! Now, alas, what is our life? *It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away;* James iv. 14.

And, if we do thus value a perishing life that is going out every moment, what price shall we set upon Eternity? If Christ be our life, how precious is that life, which neither inward distempers nor outward violences can bereave us of! which neither can be decayed by time, nor altered with cross events! Hear the Chosen Vessel: *What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ: yea, doubtless, I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ;* Phil. iii. 7, 8: and, as one that did not esteem his own life dear to him (Acts xx. 24.) in respect of that better, *Always,* saith he, *bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus; that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body;* 2 Cor. iv. 10. How cheerfully have the noble and conquering armies of holy Martyrs given away these momentary lives, that they might hold fast their Jesus, the life of their souls! And who can be otherwise affected, that knows and feels the infinite happiness, that offers itself to be enjoyed by him in the Lord Jesus?

Lastly, if Christ be thy life, then thou art so devoted to him, that thou livest, as in him and by him, so to him also; aiming only at his service and glory; and framing thyself wholly to his will and directions. Thou canst not so much as eat or drink but with respect to him: 1 Cor. x. 31. Oh, the gracious resolution of him, that was rapt into the third heaven, worthy to be the pattern of all faithful hearts: *According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed; but that, with all boldness, as always, so now also, Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or by death: For, to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain;* Phil. i. 20, 21. Our natural life is not worthy to be its own scope: we do not live, merely that we may live: our spiritual life, Christ, is the utmost and most perfect end of all our living; without the in-

tuition whereof, we would not live; or, if we should, our natural life were no other than a spiritual death.

O Saviour, let me not live longer, than I shall be enlivened by thee, or than thou shalt be glorified by me.

And what rule should I follow in all the carriage of my life, but thine? thy precepts, thine examples; that so I may live thee, as well as preach thee; and, in both, may find thee, as thou hast truly laid forth thyself, *The Way, the Truth, and the Life;* John xiv. 6: *the Way*, wherein I shall walk; *the Truth*, which I shall believe and profess; and *the Life*, which I shall enjoy.

In all my moral actions therefore, teach me to square myself by thee: whatever I am about to do, or speak, or effect, let me think, "If my Saviour were now upon earth, would he do this, that I am now putting my hand unto? would he speak these words, that I am now uttering? would he be thus disposed, as I now feel myself? Let me not yield myself to any thought, word, or action, which my Saviour would be ashamed to own. Let him be pleased so to manage his own life in me, that all the interest he hath given me in myself may be wholly surrendered to him; that I may be as it were dead in myself, while he lives and moves in me.

(4.) By virtue of this blessed union, as Christ is become our life; so, (that, which is the *highest improvement*, not only of the rational, but the supernatural and spiritual life) is he thereby also *made unto us of God, Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption;* 1 Cor. i. 30: not that he only works these great things in and for us; this were too cold a construction of the divine bounty: but that he really becomes all these to us, who are true partakers of him.

[1.] Even of the wisest men, that ever nature could boast of, is verified that character, which the divine Apostle gave of them, long ago: *Their foolish heart was darkened; professing themselves to be wise, they became fools;* Rom. i. 21, 22: and still the best of us, if we be but ourselves, may take up that complaint of Asaph; *So foolish was I, and ignorant: I was as a beast before thee;* Ps. lxxiii. 22: and of Agur, the son of Jakeh; *Surely, I am more brutish than man, and have not the understanding of a man: I neither learned wisdom, nor have the knowledge of the Holy;* Prov. xxx. 2, 3. And if any man will be challenging more to himself, he must, at last, take up, with Solomon; *I said I will be wise, but it was far from me;* Eccl. vii. 23.

But, how defective soever we are in ourselves, there is wisdom enough in our Head, Christ, to supply all our wants. He, that is the Wisdom of the Father, is, by the Father, made our Wisdom: *In him, are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*, saith the Apostle; Col. ii. 3: so hid, that they are both revealed and communicated to his own: *For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ;* 2 Cor. iv. 6. In and by him, hath it pleased the Father to impart himself

unto us: *He is the image of the invisible God;* Col. i. 15: even, the *brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person;* Heb. i. 3. It was a just check, that he gave to Philip in the Gospel: *Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He, that hath seen me, hath seen the Father;* John xiv. 9.

And this point of wisdom is so high and excellent, that all human skill, and all the so much admired depths of philosophy, are but mere ignorance and foolishness, in comparison of it. Alas, what can these profound wits reach unto, but the very outside of these visible and transitory things? As for the inward forms of the meanest creatures, they are so altogether hid from them, as if they had no being: and as for spiritual and divine things, the most knowing naturalists are either stone-blind, that they cannot see them, or grope after them, in an Egyptian darkness: *For the natural man perceiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned;* 1 Cor. ii. 14. How much less can they know the God of Spirits, who, besides his invisibility, is infinite and incomprehensible! Only He, who is made our wisdom, enlighteneth our eyes with this divine knowledge: *No man knoweth the Father, but the Son; and he, to whomsoever the Son will reveal him;* Matt. xi. 27.

Neither is Christ made our wisdom only in respect of heavenly wisdom imparted to us; but in respect of his perfect wisdom imputed unto us. Alas, our ignorances and sinful misprisions are many and great: where should we appear, if our faith did not fetch succour from our all-wise and all-sufficient Mediator? O Saviour, we are wise in thee our Head, how weak soever we are of ourselves. Thine infinite wisdom, and goodness, both covers and makes up all our defects. The wife cannot be poor, while the husband is rich: thou hast vouchsafed to give us a right to thy store: we have no reason to be disheartened with our own spiritual wants, while thou art made our wisdom.

[2.] It is not mere wisdom, that can make us acceptable to God. If the serpents were not, in their kind, wiser than we, we should not have been advised to be wise as serpents. That God, who is essential justice, as well as wisdom, requires all his to be not more wise, than exquisitely righteous.

Such, in themselves, they cannot be: *For in many things we sin all.* Such, therefore, they are and must be in Christ, their Head; who is made unto us of God, together with wisdom, Righteousness.

O incomprehensible mercy! *He hath made him, to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him;* 2 Cor. v. 21.

What a marvellous and happy exchange is here! We are nothing but sin: Christ is perfect righteousness. He is made our sin, that we might be made his righteousness. He, that knew no sin, is made sin for us; that we, who are all sin, might be made God's righteousness in him. In ourselves, we are not only sinful; but sin: in him, we are not righteous only; but righteousness itself. Of ourselves,

we are not righteous: we are made so. In ourselves, we are not righteous; but in him: we made not ourselves so; but the same God, in his infinite mercy, who made him sin for us, hath made us his righteousness. No otherwise are we made his righteousness, than he is made our sin: our sin is made his, by God's imputation; so is his righteousness made ours.

How fully doth the Second Adam answer and transcend the First! *By the offence of* the First, *judgment came upon all men to condemnation: by the righteousness of* the Second, *the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life;* Rom. v. 18. *As, by one man's disobedience, many were made sinners; so, by the obedience of one, shall many be made righteous;* v. 19: righteous, not in themselves; *so death passed upon all, for that all have sinned;* v. 12: but in him, that made them so, *by whom we have received the atonement;* v. 11.

How free then, and how perfect, is our justification! What quarrel may the pure and holy God have against righteousness? against his own righteousness? and such are we made in and by him.

What can now stand, between us and blessedness?

Not our sins: for, this is the praise of his mercy, that he *justifies the ungodly;* Rom. iv. 5. Yea, were we not sinful, how were we capable of his justification? sinful, as in the term, from whence this act of his mercy moveth; not as in the term, wherein it resteth. His grace finds us sinful: it doth not leave us so. Far be it from the Righteous Judge of the World to absolve a wicked soul, continuing such: *He, that justifieth the wicked, and he, that condemneth the just, even they both are an abomination to the Lord;* Prov. xvii. 15. No; but he kills sin in us, while he remits it; and, at once, cleanseth and accepts our persons. Repentance and remission do not lag, one after another: both of them meet, at once, in the penitent soul: at once, doth the hand of our faith lay hold on Christ, and the hand of Christ lay hold on the soul to justification; so as the sins that are done away can be no bar to our happiness.

And what but sins can pretend to a hinderance? All our other weaknesses are no eye-sore to God; no rub in our way to heaven.

What matters it then, how unworthy we are of ourselves? It is Christ's obedience, that is our righteousness: and that obedience cannot but be exquisitely perfect; cannot but be, both justly accepted as his, and mercifully accepted as for us.

There is a great deal of difference, betwixt being righteous, and being made righteousness. Every regenerate soul hath an inherent justice or righteousness in itself: *He, that is righteous, let him be righteous still,* saith the Angel, Rev. xxii. 11. But, at the best, this righteousness of ours is, like ourselves, full of imperfection: *If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?* Ps. cxxx. 3. *Behold, we are before thee in our trespasses; for we cannot stand before thee, because of this;* Ezra ix. 15. *How should a man be just with God? if he will contend with him, he cannot answer him one of a thousand;* Job ix. 2, 3. So then, *he, that doth righteousness, is righteous;* 1 John iii. 7: but, by pardon and indulgence; because the righteousness he doth is weak and imperfect.

He, that is made righteousness, is perfectly righteous by a gracious acceptation, by a free imputation of absolute obedience.

Woe were us, if we were put over to our own accomplishments! for, *Cursed is every one, that continues not in all things, which are written in the book of the Law, to do them;* Gal. iii. 10. Deut. xxvii. 26: and, *If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us:* 1 John i. 8. Lo, if there be truth in us, we must confess we have sin in us; and, if we have sin, we violate the Law; and, if we violate the Law, we lie open to a curse.

But, here is our comfort, that our Surety hath paid our debt. It is true, we lay forfeited to death. Justice had said, *The soul, that sinneth, it shall die;* Ezek. xviii. 4. Mercy interposeth and satisfies. The Son of God, whose every drop of blood was worth a world, pays this death for us: and now, *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth: who is he, that condemneth? It is Christ, that died; yea, rather that is risen again; who is even at the right-hand of God; who also maketh intercession for us;* Rom. viii. 33, 34. Our sin, our death, is laid upon him, and undertaken by him: *He was wounded for our transgressions: he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisements of our peace were upon him; and, with his stripes, we are healed;* Is. liii. 5. His death, his obedience, is made over to us. So then, the sin that we have committed, and the death that we have deserved, is not ours; but the death which he hath endured, and the obedience that he hath performed, is so ours as he is ours; who is, thereupon, made of God our righteousness.

Where now are those enemies of grace, that scoff at imputation; making it a ridiculous paradox, that a man should become just by another man's righteousness? How dare they stand out against the word of truth, which tells us expressly, that Christ is made our righteousness? What strangers are they, to that grace they oppugn! How little do they consider, that Christ is ours! his righteousness therefore, by which we are justified, is in him our own. He, that hath *borne the iniquity of us all* (Is. liii. 6.), hath taught us to call our sins our *debts;* Matt. vi. 12: those debts can be but once paid: if the bounty of our Redeemer hath staked down the sums required; and cancelled the bonds; and this payment is, through mercy, fully accepted as from our own hands; what danger, what scruple can remain?

What do we then, weak souls, tremble to think of appearing before the dreadful tribunal of the Almighty? We know him, indeed, to be infinitely and inflexibly just: we know his most pure eyes cannot abide to behold sin: we know we have nothing else, but sin, for him to behold in us. Certainly, were we to appear before him in the mere shape of our own sinful selves, we had reason to shake and shiver at the apprehension of that terrible appearance: but, now that our faith assures us we shall no otherwise be presented to that awful Judge, than as clothed with the robes of Christ's righteousness; how confident should we be, thus decked with the garments of our elder brother, to carry away a blessing! While,

therefore, we are dejected with the conscience of our own vileness, we have reason to lift up our heads in the confidence of that perfect righteousness, which Christ is made unto us, and we are made in him.

[3.] At the bar of men, many a one is pronounced just, who remains inwardly foul and guilty: for the best of men can but judge of things, as they appear; not as they are. But the Righteous Arbiter of the World declares none just, whom he makes not holy.

The same mercy therefore, that makes Christ our righteousness, makes him also our Sanctification. Of ourselves, wretched men, what are we other, at our best, than unholy creatures; full of pollution and spiritual uncleanness? It is his most Holy Spirit, that must *cleanse us from all the filthiness of our flesh and spirit;* 2 Cor. vii. 1: and work us daily, to further degrees of sanctification; *He, that is holy, let him be holy still;* Rev. xxii. 11. Neither can there be any thing more abhorring from his infinite justice and holiness, than to justify those souls, which lie still in the loathsome ordure of their corruptions.

Certainly, they never truly learnt Christ, who would draw over Christ's righteousness, as a case of their close wickednesses; that sever holiness from justice, and give no place to sanctification in the evidence of their justifying. Never man was justified without faith: and, wheresoever faith is, there it *purifieth* and cleanseth; Acts xv. 9.

But, besides that the Spirit of Christ works thus powerfully, though gradually, within us, *that he may sanctify and cleanse us with the washing of water, by the word;* his holiness is mercifully imputed to us, *that he may present us to himself a glorious Church; not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that we should be holy, and without blemish;* Eph. v. 26, 27: so as that inchoate holiness, which, by his gracious inoperation, grows up daily in us towards a full perfection, is abundantly supplied by his absolute holiness, made no less by imputation ours, than it is personally his.

When, therefore, we look into our bosoms, we find just cause to be ashamed of our impurity; and to loath those dregs of corruption, that yet remain in our sinful nature: but, when we cast up our eyes to heaven, and behold the infinite holiness of that Christ to whom we are united, which by faith is made ours; we have reason to bear up against all the discouragements that may arise from the conscience of our own vileness, and to look God in the face with an awful boldness, as those whom he is pleased to present *holy, and unblameable, and unreprovable in his sight;* Col. i. 22. as knowing, that *he that sanctifieth, and they that are sanctified, are all of one;* Heb. ii. 11.

[4.] Redemption was the great errand, for which the Son of God came down into the world; and the work which he did, while he was in the world; and that, which, in way of application of it, he shall be ever accomplishing, till he shall deliver up his Mediatory Kingdom into the hands of his Father. In this he begins, in this he finishes, the great business of our salvation: for those, who,

in this life, are enlightened by his wisdom, justified by his merits, sanctified by his grace, are yet conflicting with manifold temptations, and struggling with varieties of miseries and dangers; till, upon their happy death and glorious resurrection, they shall be fully freed, by their ever-blessed and victorious Redeemer.

He, therefore, who, by virtue of that heavenly union, is made unto us of God, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification; is also, upon the same ground, made unto us our full Redemption.

Redemption implies a captivity. We are naturally under the woeful bondage of the Law, of Sin, of Miseries, of Death.

The Law is a cruel exactor: for it requires of us what we cannot now do, and whips us for not doing it: *For the Law worketh wrath;* Rom. iv. 15: and, *as many as are of the works of the Law, are under the curse;* Gal. iii. 10. Sin is a worse tyrant than he; and takes advantage to exercise his cruelty, by the law: *For, when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the Law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death;* Rom. vii. 5. Upon sin necessarily follows Misery, the forerunner of death; and Death, the upshot of all miseries: *By one man, sin entered into the world; and death, by sin: and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned;* Rom. v. 12.

From all these, is Christ our Redemption. From the Law: for, *Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us;* Gal. iii. 13. From Sin: for, *we are dead to sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord;* Rom. vi. 11: *Sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the Law, but under Grace;* v. 14. From Death; and, therein, from all Miseries: *O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the Law: but, thanks be to God, which giveth us victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ;* 1 Cor. xv. 55, 56, 57.

Now, then, let the Law do his worst: *we are not under the Law, but under Grace;* Rom. vi. 14. The case therefore is altered, betwixt the Law and us. It is not now a cruel task-master; to beat us to, and for our work: it is our school-master; to direct, and to whip us unto Christ. It is not a severe judge; to condemn us: it is a friendly guide; to set us the way towards heaven.

Let Sin join his forces together with the law: they cannot prevail to our hurt: *For, what the Law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit;* Rom. viii. 3, 4.

Let Death join his forces with them both: we are yet safe: *For the law of the Spirit of Life hath freed us from the law of sin and of death;* Rom. viii. 2.

What can we therefore fear, what can we suffer, while Christ is made our Redemption?

Finally, as thus Christ is made unto us Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption; so, whatsoever else he either is,

or hath, or doth, by virtue of this blessed union, becomes ours. He is our *Riches;* Eph. i. 7: our *Strength;* Ps. xxvii. 1. xxviii. 7: our *Glory;* Eph. i. 18: our *Salvation;* 1 Thes. v. 9. Is. xii. 2: our *All;* Col. iii. 11. He is all to us; and all is ours in him.

SECT. 2.

The External Privileges of this Union, a Right to the Blessings of Earth and Heaven.

From these primary and intrinsical privileges therefore, flow all those secondary and external, wherewith we are blessed: and, therein, A RIGHT TO ALL THE BLESSINGS OF GOD, BOTH OF THE RIGHT-HAND AND OF THE LEFT; AND INTEREST IN ALL THE GOOD THINGS, BOTH OF EARTH AND HEAVEN.

Hereupon it is, that the glorious angels of heaven become our guardians; keeping us in all our ways; and working secretly for our good, upon all occasions: that all God's creatures are at our service: that we have a true spiritual title to them; *All things are yours,* saith the Apostle; *and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's;* 1 Cor. iii. 22, 23.

But, take heed, my son, of mislaying thy claim to what, and in what manner, thou oughtest not. There is a civil right, that must regulate our propriety to these earthly things: our spiritual right neither gives us possession of them, nor takes away the right and propriety of others. Every man hath and must have what, by the just laws of purchase, gift, or inheritance, is derived to him: otherwise, there would follow an infinite confusion in the world: we could neither enjoy nor give our own; and only will and might must be the arbiters of all men's estates; which how unequal it would be, both reason and experience can sufficiently evince.

This right is not for the direption or usurpation of that, which civil titles have legally put over to others: there were no theft, no robbery, no oppression in the world, if any man's goods might be every man's: But for the warrantable and comfortable enjoying of those earthly commodities in regard of God their original owner, which are, by human conveyances, justly become ours. *The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness of it:* in his right whatever parcels do lawfully descend unto us, we may justly possess, as we have them legally made over to us, from the secondary and immediate owners.

There is a generation of men, who have vainly fancied the founding of temporal dominion in grace; and have, upon this mistaking, outed the true heirs as intruders, and seo fed the just and godly in the possession of wicked inheritors: which, whether they be worse Commonwealth's men or Christians, is to me utterly uncertain. Sure I am, they are enemies to both: while, on the one side, they destroy all civil propriety and commerce; and, on the other, reach the extent of the power of Christianity so far, as to render it inju-

rious and destructive, both to reason and to the laws of all well-ordered humanity.

Nothing is ours, by injury and injustice: all things are so ours, that we may, with a good conscience, enjoy them as from the hand of a munificent God, when they are rightfully estated upon us by the lawful convention or bequest of men.

In this regard it is, that a Christian man is the Lord of the whole Universe; and hath a right to the whole creation of God. How can he challenge less? he is a son; and, in that, an heir; and, according to the high expression of the Holy Ghost, *a co-heir with Christ.*

As, therefore, we may not be high-minded, but fear; so we may not be too low-hearted, in the under-valuing of our condition: in God, we are great; how mean soever, in ourselves. In his right, the world is ours; whatever pittance we enjoy, in our own. How can we go less, when we are one with him, who is the possessor of heaven and earth?

It were but a poor comfort to us, if, by virtue of this union, we could only lay claim to all earthly things: alas, how vain and transitory are the best of these; perishing under our hand, in the very use of them! and, in the mean while, how unsatisfying in the fruition! All this were nothing, if we had not hereby an interest in the best of all God's favours; in the heaven of heavens; and the eternity of that glory, which is there laid up for his Saints; far above the reach of all human expressions or conceits. It was the word of him, who is the Eternal Word of his Father; *Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me;* John xvii. 24: and not only to be mere spectators, but even partners of all this celestial bliss, together with himself; *The glory, which thou gavest me, I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one;* John xvii. 22. Oh, the transcendent and incomprehensible blessedness of believers, which, even when they enjoy, they cannot be able to utter; for measure infinite, for duration eternal! Oh, the inexplicable joy of the full and everlasting accomplishment of the happy union of Christ and the believing soul; more fit for thankful wonder and ravishment of spirit, than for any finite apprehension!

CHAP. VI.

THE MEANS, BY WHICH THIS UNION IS WROUGHT.

Now, that we may look a little further into the Means by which this union is wrought, know, my son, that, as there are two persons, betwixt whom this union is made, Christ and the believer; so each of them concurs to the happy effecting of it: Christ, by his Spirit diffused through the hearts of all the regenerate, giving life and activity to them; the believer, laying hold by faith upon Christ, so working in him: and these do so re-act upon each other, that,

from their mutual operation, results this gracious union whereof we treat.

Here is a spiritual marriage betwixt Christ and the soul. The liking of one part doth not make up the match; but the consent of both. To this purpose, Christ gives his Spirit; the soul plights her faith: what interest have we in Christ, but by his Spirit? what interest hath Christ in us, but by our faith?

On the one part: He *hath given us his Holy Spirit*, saith the Apostle; 1 Thess. iv. 8: and, in a way of correlation, *We have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God;* 1 Cor. ii. 12. And this Spirit we have so received, as that *he dwells in us;* Rom. viii. 11: and so dwells in us, as that we are *joined to the Lord;* and *he, that is joined to the Lord, is one spirit;* 1 Cor. vi. 17.

On the other part: *we have access by Faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.* So as now, *The life, that we live in the flesh, we live by the faith of the Son of God;* Gal. ii. 20: who *dwells in our hearts by faith;* Eph. iii. 17. Oh, the grace of faith! according to St. Peter's style (2 Pet i. 1.), truly *precious:* justly recommended to us by St. Paul (Eph. vi 16.), above all other graces incident into the soul; as that, which, if not alone, yet chiefly transacts all the main affairs tending to salvation. For Faith is the quickening grace; Gal. ii. 20. Rom. i. 17: the directing grace; 2 Cor. v. 7: the protecting grace; Eph. vi. 16: the establishing grace; Rom. xi. 20. 2 Cor. i. 24: the justifying grace; Rom. v. 1: the sanctifying and purifying grace; Acts xv. 9. Faith is the grace, that assents to, apprehends, applies, appropriates Christ; Heb. xi. 1: and, hereupon, the uniting grace; and, which comprehends all, the saving grace.

If ever, therefore, we look for any consolation in Christ, or to have any part in this beatifical union, it must be the main care of our hearts to make sure of a lively Faith in the Lord Jesus; to lay fast hold upon him; to clasp him close to us; yea, to receive him inwardly into our bosoms: and, so to make him ours and ourselves his, that we may be joined to him, as our Head; espoused to him, as our Husband; incorporated into him, as our Nourishment; engrafted in him, as our Stock; and laid upon him, as a sure Foundation.

CHAP. VII.

THE UNION OF CHRIST'S MEMBERS WITH THEMSELVES.

HITHERTO, we have treated of this blessed union, as in relation to Christ, the Head. It remains that we now consider of it, as it stands in relation to the members of his mystical body, one towards another.

For, as the body is united to the head; so must the members be

united to themselves, to make the body truly complete. Thus the Holy Ghost, by his Apostle: *As the body is one, and hath many members; and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so is Christ*; 1 Cor. xii. 12.

From this entire conjunction of the members with each other, arises that happy communion of Saints, which we profess both to believe and to partake of.

This mystical body of Christ is a large one; extending itself both to heaven and earth. There is a real union betwixt all those far-spread limbs; between the Saints in heaven, between the Saints on earth, between the Saints in heaven and earth.

SECT. 1.

The union of Christ's Members in Heaven.

We have reason to begin at HEAVEN. Thence is the original of our union and blessedness.

There was never place for discord in that region of glory, since the rebellious angels were cast out thence. *The spirits of just men made perfect*, (Heb. xii. 23.) must needs agree in a perfect unity.

Neither can it be otherwise: for there is but one will in heaven; one scope of the desires of blessed souls, which is the glory of their God: all the whole choir sing one song; and in that one harmonious tune of Hallelujah. We, poor parcel-sainted souls here on earth, profess to bend our eyes directly upon the same holy end, the honour of our Maker and Redeemer; but, alas, at our best we are drawn to look asquint at our own aims of profit or pleasure: we profess to sing loud praises unto God; but it is with many harsh and jarring notes. Above, there is a perfect accordance, in an unanimous glorifying of him, that sits upon the throne for ever. *Oh, how ye love the Lord, all ye his saints*; Ps. xxxi. 23. *Oh, how joyful ye are in glory*; Ps. cxlix. 5. *The heavens shall praise thy wonders, O Lord; thy faithfulness also in the congregation of the Saints*; Ps. lxxxix. 5.

Oh, what a blessed commonwealth is that above! *The city of the Living God, the heavenly Jerusalem*; (ever *at unity with itself*; Ps. cxxii. 3.) and, therein, *an innumerable company of angels, and the general assembly and Church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven; the spirits of just men made perfect, and*, whom they all adore, *God the Judge of all, and Jesus the Mediator of the New Testament*; Heb. xii. 22, 23, 24. All these as one, as holy. Those *twenty thousand chariots* of heaven (Ps. lxviii. 17.) move all one way. When those four beasts *full of eyes, round about the throne, give glory, and honour, and thanks to him that sits upon the throne, saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come; then the four and twenty elders fall down before him, and cast their crowns before the throne*; Rev. iv. 6—10. No one wears his crown, while the rest cast down theirs: all accord in one

act of giving glory to the Highest. After the sealing of the tribes, *A great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb; clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, Salvation to our God, which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. And all the angels stood about the throne, and about the elders, and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces; and worshipped God, Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto God for ever and ever;* Rev. vii. 9—12.

Lo, those spirits, which here below were habited with several bodies, different in shapes, statures, ages, complexions, are now above as one spirit, rather distinguished than divided; all united in one perpetual adoration and fruition of the God of Spirits; and mutually happy in God, in themselves, in each other.

SECT. 2.

The union of Christ's Members upon Earth:—(1.) *In matter of judgment:*—(2.) *In matter of affection:*—(3.) *A complaint of Divisions; and, notwithstanding them, an assertion of unity:*—(4.) *The necessary effects and fruits of this union of Christian hearts.*

Our copy is set us, above: we labour to take it out, here on EARTH. What do we, but daily pray, that the blessed union of souls, which is eminent in that empyreal heaven, may be exemplified by us in this region of mortality? For, *having through Christ an access by one Spirit unto God the Father*, being *no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God;* Eph. ii. 18, 19: we cease not to pray, *Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven;* Matt. vi. 10. Yea, O Saviour, thou, who canst not but be heard, hast prayed to thy Father for the accomplishment of this union; *That they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be perfect in one;* John xvii. 22. 23.

What, then, is this union of the members of Christ here on earth, but a spiritual Oneness, arising from a happy conspiration of their thoughts and affections? For, whereas there are two main principles of all human actions and dispositions, the brain and the heart, the conjuncture of these two cannot but produce a perfect union: from the one, our thoughts take their rise; our affections, from the other; in both, the soul puts itself forth upon all matter of accord or difference.

(1.) The union of *Thoughts*, is, when we mind the same things, when we agree in the same truths. This is the charge, which the Apostle of the Gentiles lays upon his Corinthians; and, in their persons, upon all Christians: *Now I beseech you, brethren, by the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and*

that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together, in the same mind and in the same judgment; 1 Cor. i. 10.

And this is no other, than that *one faith*, (Eph. iv. 5.) which makes up the one Church of Christ upon earth. One, both in respect of Times and Places.

Of Times: so as the Fathers of the first world, the Patriarchs of the next, and all God's people in their ages, that looked, together with them, for the redemption of Israel, (Luke ii. 38.) are united with us Christians of the last days, in the same belief; and make up one entire body of Christ's Catholic Church.

Of Places: so as all those, that truly profess the Name of Christ, though scattered into the farthest remote regions of the earth, even those, that walk with their feet opposite to ours, yet meet with us in the same centre of Christian faith, and make up one household of God.

Not that we can hope it possible, that all Christians should agree in all truths. While we are here, our minds cannot but be more unlike to each other, than our faces: yea, it is a rare thing, for a man to hold constant to his own apprehensions.

Lord God! what a world do we meet with of those, who miscal themselves several Religions; indeed, several professions of one and the same Christianity! Melchites, Georgians, Maronites, Jacobites, Armenians, Abyssines, Cophti, Nestorians, Russians, Mengrellians; and the rest, that fill up the large Map of Christianography: all which, as while they hold the head Christ, they cannot be denied the privilege of his members; so, being such, they are or should be indissolubly joined together in the unity of spirit, and maintenance of *the faith which was once delivered unto the Saints;* Jude 3. It is not the variety of by-opinions, that can exclude them from having their part in that one Catholic Church, and their just claim to the Communion of Saints. While they hold the solid and precious foundation, it is not the *hay* or *stubble* (1 Cor. iii. 12.), which they lay upon it, that can set them off from God or his Church. But, in the mean time, it must be granted, that they have much to answer for to the God of Peace and Unity, who are so much addicted to their own conceits, and so indulgent to their own interest, as to raise and maintain new doctrines, and to set up new sects in the Church of Christ, varying from the common and received truths; labouring to draw disciples after them, to the great distraction of souls, and scandal of Christianity. With which sort of disturbers I must needs say this age, into which we are fallen, hath been and is, above all that have gone before us, most miserably pestered: what good soul can be other than confounded, to hear of and see more than a hundred and fourscore new, and some of them dangerous and blasphemous, opinions, broached and defended in one, once famous and unanimous, Church of Christ? Who can say other, upon the view of these wild thoughts, than Gerson said long since, that the world, now grown old, is full of

doting fancies; if not rather, that the world, now near his end, raves and talks nothing but fancies and frenzies? How arbitrary soever these self-willed fanatics may think it, to take to themselves this liberty of thinking what they list, and venting what they think, the blessed Apostle hath long since branded them with a heavy sentence: *Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which you have learned, and avoid them: for they, that are such, serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and, by good words and fair speeches, deceive the hearts of the simple;* Rom. xvi. 17, 18.

But, notwithstanding all this hideous variety of vain and heterodoxal conceptions, he, who is the Truth of God, and the Bridegroom of his Spouse the Church, hath said, *My dove, my undefiled is one;* Cant. vi. 9: one, in the main, essential, fundamental verities necessary to salvation; though differing in divers mis-raised corollaries, inconsequent inferences, unnecessary additions, feigned traditions, unwarrantable practices. The body is one, though the garments differ: yea, rather, for most of these, the garment is one, but differs in the dressing; handsomely and comely set out by one, disguised by another. Neither is it, nor ever shall be, in the power of all the fiends of hell, the professed make-baits of the world, to make God's Church other than one: which were indeed utterly to extinguish and reduce it to nothing; for the unity and entity of the Church can no more be divided, than itself. It were no less than blasphemy, to fasten upon the chaste and most holy Husband of the Church any other, than one Spouse. In the institution of marriage, *did he not make one? yet had he the residue of the Spirit: and wherefore one? that he might seek a godly seed;* Mal. ii. 15. That, which he ordained for us, shall not the holy God much more observe in his own heavenly match with his Church? Here is then *one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism:* one Baptism, by which we enter into the Church; one Faith, which we profess in the Church; and one Lord, whom we serve, and who is the Head and Husband of the Church.

(2.) How much, therefore, doth it concern us, that we, who are united in one common belief, should be much more united in *Affection!* that where there is *one way*, there should be much more *one heart!* Jer. xxxii. 39. This is so justly supposed, that the Prophet questions, *Can two walk together, except they be agreed?* Amos iii. 3. If we walk together in our judgments, we cannot but accord in our wills.

This was the praise of the primitive Christians, and the pattern of their successors: *The multitude of them that believed, were of one heart and of one soul;* Acts iv. 32.

Yea, this is the livery, which our Lord and Saviour made choice of, whereby his menial servants should be known and distinguished: *By this, shall all men know that ye be my disciples, if ye have love to one another;* John xiii. 35. In vain shall any man pretend to a discipleship, if he do not make it good by his love to all the family of Christ.

The whole Church is the spiritual temple of God. Every believer is a living stone, laid in those sacred walls: what is our Christian love, but the mortar or cement, whereby these stones are fast joined together, to make up this heavenly building? without which, that precious fabric could not hold long together; but would be subject to disjointing, by those violent tempests of opposition, wherewith it is commonly beaten upon. There is no place for any loose stone in God's edifice: the whole Church is one entire body: all the limbs must be held together by the ligaments of Christian love; if any one will be severed, and affect to subsist of itself, it hath lost his place in the body. Thus the Apostle: that we, *being sincere in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ: From whom the whole body, fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body, unto the edifying of itself in love;* Eph. iv. 15, 16.

But, in case there happen to be differences in opinion, concerning points not essential, not necessary to salvation; this diversity may not breed an alienation of affection. That charity, which can cover a multitude of sins, may much more cover many small dissensions of judgment. We cannot hope to be all, and at all times, equally enlightened. At how many and great weaknesses of judgment, did it please our merciful Saviour to connive, in his domestic disciples! they, that had so long sat at the sacred feet of him that spake as never man spake, were yet to seek of those Scriptures, which had so clearly foretold his resurrection; John xx. 9: and, after that, were at a fault for the manner of his kingdom; Acts i. 6: yet he, that breaks not the bruised reed, nor quenches the smoking flax, falls not harshly upon them for so foul an error and ignorance; but entertains them with all loving respect, not as followers only, but as friends; John xv. 15. And his great Apostle, after he had spent himself in his unwearied endeavours upon God's Church, and had sown the seeds of wholesome and saving doctrine every where, what rank and noisome weeds of erroneous opinions rose up under his hand in the Churches of Corinth, Galatia, Ephesus, Colosse, Philippi, and Thessalonica! these he labours to root out, with much zeal, with no bitterness: so opposing the errors, as not alienating his affection from the Churches. These, these must be our precedents; pursuing that charge of the prime Apostle; *Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another; love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous;* 1 Pet. iii. 8: and that passionate and adjuring obtestation of the Apostle of the Gentiles; *If there be any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies; fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind;* Phil. ii. 1, 2.

This is it, that gives beauty, strength, glory to the Church of God, upon earth; and brings it nearest to the resemblance of that triumphant part above, where there is all perfection of love and concord. In imitation whereof, the Psalmist, sweetly; *Behold,*

how good and joyful a thing it is, brethren, to dwell together in unity! Ps. cxxxiii. 1.

(3.) So much the more justly lamentable it is, to see the manifold and grievous *Distractions* of the Church of Christ, both in judgment and affection.

Woe is me, into how many thousand pieces, is the seamless coat of our Saviour rent! Yea, into what numberless atoms, is the precious body of Christ torn and minced! There are more religions, than nations upon earth; and in each religion, as many different conceits, as men. If St. Paul, when his Corinthians did but say, *I am of Paul, I am of Apollos, I am of Cephas*, could ask, *Is Christ divided?* (1 Cor. i. 12, 13.) when there was only an emulatory magnifying of their own teachers, though agreeing and orthodox; what, think we, would he now say, if he saw a hundred of sect-masters and heresiarchs, some of them opposite to other, all to the truth, applauded by their credulous and divided followers? all of them claiming Christ for theirs, and denying him to their gainsayers. Would he not ask, "Is Christ multiplied? Is Christ subdivided? Is Christ shred into infinites?" O God! what is become of Christianity? How do evil spirits and men labour to destroy that creed, which we have always constantly professed! For, if we set up more Christs, where is that one? and if we give way to these infinite distractions, where is the Communion of Saints?

But, be not too much dismayed, my Son. Notwithstanding all these cold dispiritings, take courage to thyself. He, that is truth itself, hath said, *The gates of hell shall not prevail against* his Church; Matt. xvi. 18. In spite of all devils, there shall be Saints; and those are and shall be as the scales of the Leviathan, whose *strong pieces of shields are his pride, shut up together, as with a close seal. One is so near to another, that no air can come betwixt them. They are joined one to another; they stick together, that they cannot be sundered;* Job xli. 15, 16, 17. In all the main principles of religion, there is *an universal and unanimous consent of all Christians:* and these are they, that constitute a Church. Those, that agree in these, Christ is pleased to admit, for matter of doctrine, as members of that body, whereof he is the Head; and, if they admit not of each other as such, the fault is in the uncharitableness of the refusers, no less than in the error of the refused. And, if any vain and loose stragglers will needs sever themselves, and wilfully choose to go ways of their own; let them know, that the union of Christ's Church shall consist entire without them: this great ocean will be one collection of waters, when these drops are lost in the dust. In the mean time, it highly concerns all that wish well to the Sacred Name of Christ, to labour *to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace;* Eph. iv. 3: and to renew and continue the prayer of the Apostle, for all the professors of Christianity; *Now the God of Patience and Consolation grant you to be like-minded one towards another, according to Christ Jesus: that ye may, with one mind and one mouth, glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ;* Rom. xv. 5, 6.

(4.) Far be it from us, to think this union of the hearts of God's Saints upon earth can be idle and ineffectual: but, wherever it is, *it puts forth itself in a like-affectedness of disposition, into an improvement of gifts, into a communication of outward blessings, to the benefit of that happy consociation.*

We cannot be single in our affections, if we be limbs of a Christian community. What member of the body can complain, so as the rest shall not feel it? even the head and heart are in pain, when a joint of the least toe suffers. No Christian can be afflicted alone. It is not St. Paul's case only; *Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is offended, and I burn not?* 2 Cor. xi. 29. Our shoulders are not our own: we must *bear one anothers' burdens;* Gal. vi. 2. There is a better kind of spiritual good-fellowship in all the Saints of God: they hate a propriety of passions: *Rejoice with them, that rejoice; and weep with them, that weep;* Rom. xii. 15.

Their affections are not more communicative, than their gifts and graces. Those, as they are bestowed with an intuition of the common good, so they are improvided. Wherefore hath this man quickness of wit; that man, depth of judgment: this, heat of zeal; that, power of elocution: this, skill; that, experience: this, authority; that, strength: but that all should be laid together, for the raising of the common stock? How rich, therefore, is every Christian soul, that is not only furnished with its own graces, but hath a special interest in all the excellent gifts of all the most eminent servants of God through the whole world! Surely, he cannot be poor, while there is any spiritual wealth in the Church of God upon earth.

Neither are or can these gifts be in the danger of concealment: they are still put forth for the public advantage. As, therefore, no true Christian is his own man; so he freely lays out himself by Example, by Admonition, by Exhortation, by Consolation, by Prayer, for the universal benefit of all his fellow-members.

By Example: which is not a little winning and prevalent: *Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works; and glorify your Father, which is in heaven,* saith our Saviour, in his Sermon upon the Mount; Matt. v. 16: and his great Apostle seconds his charge to his Philippians; *That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life;* Phil. ii. 15, 16. Lo, the world sits in darkness; and, either stirs not, or moves with danger: good example is a light to their feet; which directs them to walk in the ways of God, without erring, without stumbling; so as the good man's actions are so many copies for novices to take out, no less instructive than the wisest men's precepts.

By Admonition: The sinner is in danger of drowning: seasonable admonition is a hand reached out, that lays hold on him now sinking, and draws him up to the shore. The sinner is already in the fire: seasonable admonition snatches him out from the ever-

lasting burnings; Jude 23. The charitable Christian may not forbear this (ofttimes thankless, but) always necessary and profitable duty: *Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart: thou shalt, in any wise, rebuke thy neighbour; and not suffer sin upon him;* Lev. xix. 17.

By Exhortation: The fire of God's Spirit within us is subject to many damps, and dangers of quenching: seasonable exhortation blows it up; and quickens those sparks of good motions, to a perfect flame. Even the best of us lies open to a certain deadness and obduredness of heart: seasonable exhortation shakes off this peril; and keeps the heart in a holy tenderness, and whether awful or cheerful disposition: *Exhort one another daily, while it is called to-day; lest any of you be hardened, through the deceitfulness of sin;* Heb. iii. 13.

By Consolation: We are all naturally subject to droop under the pressure of afflictions: seasonable comforts lift and stay us up. It is a sad complaint, that the Church makes in the Lamentations; *They have heard that I sigh: there is none to comfort me;* Lam. i. 21: and David sets the same mournful ditty upon his Shoshannim: *Reproach hath broken my heart; and I am full of heaviness: and I looked for some to take pity, and there was none; and for comforters, but I found none,* Ps. lxix. 20. Wherefore hath God given to men *the tongue of the learned,* but that they *might know to speak a word in season to him that is weary?* Is. l. 4. That they may *strengthen the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees;* and *say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not?* Is. xxxv. 3, 4. The charge, that our Saviour gives to Peter, holds universally: *Thou, when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren;* Luke xxii. 32.

By Prayer: so as each member of Christ's Church sues for all; neither can any one be shut out, from partaking the benefit of the devotions of all God's Saints upon earth. There is a certain spiritual traffic of piety, betwixt all God's children; wherein they exchange prayers with each other: not regarding number, so much as weight. Am I weak in spirit, and faint in my supplications? I have no less share in the most fervent prayers of the holiest suppliants, than in my own: all the vigour, that is in the most ardent hearts, supplies my defects: while there is life in their faithful devotions, I cannot go away unblessed.

Lastly, where there is a communion of inward graces and spiritual services, there must needs be much more a communication of outward and temporal good things, as just occasion requireth. Away with those dotages of Platonical or Anabaptistical Communities. Let proprieties be, as they ought, constantly fixed, where the laws and civil right have placed them; but, let the use of these outward blessings be managed and commanded, by the necessities of our brethren: *Withhold not thy goods from the owners thereof; when it is in the power of thy hand to do it: Say not unto thy neighbour, Go, and come again to-morrow, and I will give it; when thou hast it by thee;* Prov. iii. 27, 28. These temporal things were

given us, not to engross, and hoard up superfluously; but to distribute and dispense: *As we, therefore, have opportunity, let us do good unto all men; especially them, who are of the household of faith*; Gal. vi. 10.

Such then is the union of God's children here on earth, both in matter of Judgment and Affection; and the beneficial Improvement of that affection, whether in spiritual gifts, or good offices, or communicating of our earthly substance. Where the heart is one, none of these can be wanting; and, where they all are, there is a happy Communion of Saints.

SECT. 3.

The union of the Saints on Earth with those in Heaven.

As there is a perfect union betwixt the glorious Saints in heaven, and an union, though imperfect, betwixt the Saints on earth; so there is an union, partly perfect and partly imperfect, between THE SAINTS IN HEAVEN and THE SAINTS BELOW UPON EARTH: perfect, in respect of those glorified Saints above; imperfect, in respect of the weak returns we are able to make to them again.

Let no man think, that, because those blessed souls are out of sight far distant in another world, and we are here toiling in a vale of tears, we have therefore lost all mutual regard to each other: no; there is still, and ever will be, a secret but unfailing correspondence between heaven and earth. The present happiness of those heavenly citizens cannot have abated ought of their knowledge and charity; but must needs have raised them to a higher pitch of both. They, therefore, who are now glorious comprehensors, cannot but, in a generality, retain the notice of the sad condition of us poor travellers here below; panting towards our rest, together with them: and, in common, wish for the happy consummation of this our weary pilgrimage, in the fruition of their glory. That they have any perspective, whereby they can see down into our particular wants, is that, which we find no ground to believe: it is enough, that they have an universal apprehension of the estate of Christ's warfaring Church upon the face of the earth; Rev. vi. 10: and fellow-members of the same mystical body long for a perfect glorification of the whole.

As for us wretched pilgrims, that are yet left here below to tug with many difficulties, we cannot forget that better half of us, that is now triumphant in glory. O ye blessed Saints above, we honour your memories so far as we ought: we do with praise recount your virtues: we magnify your victories: we bless God, for your happy exemption from the misery of this world, and for your estating in that blessed immortality: we imitate your holy examples: we long and pray for a happy consociation with you. We dare not raise

temples, dedicate altars, direct prayers to you: we dare not, finally, offer any thing to you, which you are unwilling to receive; nor put any thing upon you, which you would disclaim as prejudicial to your Creator and Redeemer. It is abundant comfort to us, that some part of us is in the fruition of that glory, whereto we, the other poor labouring part, desire and strive to aspire; that our head and shoulders are above water, while the other limbs are yet wading through the stream.

CHAP. VIII.

A RECAPITULATION AND SUM OF THE WHOLE TREATISE.

To wind up all: My son, if ever thou look for sound comfort on earth and salvation in heaven, unglue thyself from the world and the vanities of it: put thyself upon thy Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ: leave not, till thou findest thyself firmly united to him; so as thou art become a limb of that body whereof he is head, a spouse of that husband, a branch of that stem, a stone laid upon that foundation. Look not, therefore, for any blessing out of him; and in, and by, and from him, look for all blessings. Let him be thy life; and wish not to live longer than thou art quickened by him. Find him thy Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, Redemption; thy Riches, thy Strength, thy Glory.

Apply unto thyself all that thy Saviour is or hath done *. Wouldst thou have the graces of God's Spirit? fetch them from his anointing. Wouldst thou have power against spiritual enemies? fetch it from his sovereignty. Wouldst thou have redemption? fetch it from his passion. Wouldst thou have absolution? fetch it from his perfect innocence: freedom from the curse? fetch it from his cross: satisfaction? fetch it from his sacrifice: cleansing from sin? fetch it from his blood: mortification? fetch it from his grave: newness of life? fetch it from his resurrection: right to heaven? fetch it from his purchase: audience in all thy suits? fetch it from his intercession. Wouldst thou have salvation? fetch it from his session at the right-hand of Majesty. Wouldst thou have all? fetch it from him who is *one Lord, one God and Father of all; who is above all, through all, and in all;* Eph. iv. 5, 6.

And, as thy faith shall thus interest thee in Christ, thy Head; so let thy charity unite thee to his body the Church, both in earth and heaven. Hold ever an inviolable communion, with that holy and blessed fraternity. Sever not thyself from it, either in judgment or affection. Make account there is not one of God's Saints upon earth, but hath a propriety in thee; and thou mayest challenge the

* Nier. Zanch. Loc. Com. 8. de Symbolo Apost.

same in each of them: so as thou canst not but be sensible of their passions; and be freely communicative of all thy graces and all serviceable offices, by example, admonition, exhortation, consolation, prayer, beneficence, for the good of that sacred community.

And, when thou raisest up thine eyes to heaven, think of that glorious society of blessed Saints who are gone before thee; and are now there triumphing and reigning, in eternal and incomprehensible glory. Bless God for them, and wish thyself with them. Tread in their holy steps; and be ambitious of that crown of glory and immortality, which thou seest shining on their heads.

THE

CHRISTIAN:

LAID FORTH IN HIS

WHOLE DISPOSITION AND CARRIAGE.

BY JOSEPH, BISHOP OF NORWICH.

AN EXHORTATORY PREFACE

TO THE CHRISTIAN READER.

OUT of infallible rules and long experience, have I gathered up this true Character of a Christian: a labour, some will think, which might have been well spared.

Every man professes, both to know and act this part. Who is there, that would not be angry, if but a question should be made, either of his skill or interest? Surely, since the first name given at Antioch, all the believing world hath been ambitious of the honour of it: how happy were it, if all, that are willing to wear the livery, were as ready to do the service!

But, it falls out here, as in the case of all things that are at once honourable and difficult, every one affects the title, few labour for the truth of the atchievement.

Having, therefore, leisure enough to look about me, and finding the world too prone to this worst kind of hypocrisy, I have made this true draught; not more for direction, than for trial. Let no man view these lines as a stranger; but, when he looks in this glass, let him ask his heart, whether this be his own face: yea, rather, when he sees this face, let him examine his heart, whether both of them agree with their pattern: and where he finds his failings, (as who shall not?) let him strive to amend them; and never give over, while he is any way less fair than his copy.

In the mean time, I would it were less easy, by these rules, to judge even of others, besides ourselves; or, that it were uncharitable to say, there are many Professors, few Christians. If words and forms might carry it, Christ would have clients enough: but if holiness of disposition and uprightness of carriage must be the proof, woe is me! In the midst of the land, among the people, there is as the shaking of an olive-tree; and as the gleaning grapes, where the vintage is done; *Isa.* xxiv. 13.

For where is the man, that hath obtained the mastery of his corrupt affections, and to be the lord of his unruly appetite? that hath his heart in heaven, while his living carcase is stirring here upon earth? that can see the Invisible, and secretly enjoy that Saviour, to whom he is spiritually united? that hath subdued his will and reason to his belief? that fears nothing, but God; loves nothing, but goodness; hates nothing, but sin; rejoiceth in none, but true blessings: whose faith triumphs over the world; whose hope is anchored in heaven; whose charity knows no less bounds than God and men; whose humility represents him as vile to himself, as he is honourable in the reputation of God? who is wise heaven-ward, however he passes with the world; who dares be no other than just, whether he

win or lose; who is frugally liberal, discreetly courageous, holily temperate? who is ever a thrifty manager of his hours, so dividing the day betwixt his God and his vocation, that neither shall find fault with a just neglect, or an unjust partiality? whose recreations are harmless, honest, warrantable; such as may refresh nature, not debauch it? whose diet is regulated by health, not by pleasure; as one, whose table shall be no altar to his belly, nor snare to his soul? who, in his seasonable repose, lies down, and awakes with God; caring only to relieve his spirits, not to cherish sloth? whose carriage is meek, gentle, compliant, beneficial in whatsoever station; in magistracy, unpartially just; in the ministry, conscionably faithful; in the rule of his family, wisely provident, and religiously exemplary? shortly, who is a discreet and loving yoke-fellow, a tender and pious parent, a duteous and awful son, an humble and obsequious servant, an obedient and loyal subject? whose heart is constantly settled in the main truths of Christian Religion, so as he cannot be removed? in litigious points, neither too credulous, nor too peremptory? whose discourse is such, as may be meet for the expressions of a tongue, that belongs to a sound, godly, and charitable heart? whose breast continually burns with the heavenly fire of a holy devotion? whose painful sufferings are overcome with patience, and cheerful resolutions? whose conflicts are attended with undaunted courage, and crowned with a happy victory? lastly, whose death is not so full of fear and anguish, as of strong consolations in that Saviour, who hath overcome and sweetened it; nor of so much dreadfulness in itself, as of joy in the present expectation of that blessed issue of a glorious immortality, which instantly succeeds it?

Such is the Christian, whom we do here characterize, and commend to the world both for trial and imitation. Neither know I which of these many qualifications can be missing in that soul, who lays a just claim to Christ, his Redeemer.

Take your hearts to task therefore, my dear brethren, into whose hands soever these lines shall come; and, as you desire to have peace at the last, ransack them thoroughly: not contenting yourselves with a perfunctory and fashionable oversight, which will one day leave you irremediably miserable; but so search, as those, that resolve not to give over, till you find these gracious dispositions in your bosoms, which I have here described to you. So shall we be, and make each other happy, in the success of our holy labours: which the God of Heaven bless in both our hands, to his own glory, and our mutual comfort in the day of the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

THE

CHRISTIAN.

SECT. I.

HIS DISPOSITION.

THE Christian is a man, and more; an earthly saint; an angel clothed in flesh; the only lawful image of his Maker and Redeemer; the abstract of God's Church on earth; a model of heaven, made up in clay; the living temple of the Holy Ghost.

For his DISPOSITION, it hath in it as much of heaven, as his earth may make room for.

He were not a man, if he were quite free from corrupt affections; but these he masters, and keeps in with a strait hand: and if, at any time, they grow testy and headstrong, he breaks them with a severe discipline; and will rather punish himself, than not tame them. He checks his appetite with discreet, but strong denials; and forbears to pamper nature, lest it grow wanton and impetuous.

He walks on earth, but converses in heaven; having his eyes fixed on the Invisible, and enjoying a sweet communion with his God and Saviour. While all the rest of the world sits in darkness, he lives in a perpetual light: the heaven of heavens is open to none but him: thither his eye piercetb; and beholds those beams of inaccessible glory, which shine in no face but his.

The deep mysteries of godliness, which to the great clerks of the world are as a book clasped and sealed up, lie open before him fair and legible; and, while those book-men know whom they have heard of, he knows whom he hath believed.

He will not suffer his Saviour to be ever out of his eye; and if, through some worldly interceptions, he lose the sight of that blessed object for a time, he zealously retrieves him; not without a hungry check of his own miscarriage: and is now so much the more fixed by his former slackening; so as he will henceforth sooner part with his soul, than his Redeemer.

The terms of entireness, wherein he stands with the Lord of Life, are such, as he can feel; but cannot express, though he should borrow the language of angels: it is enough, that they two are one Spirit.

His reason is willingly captivated to his faith; his will to his reason; and his affections to both.

He fears nothing, that he sees; in comparison of that, which he sees not: and displeasure is more dreadful to him, than smart.

Good is the adequate object of his love; which he duly proportions, according to the degrees of its eminence: affecting the chief good, not without a certain ravishment of spirit; the lesser, with a wise and holy moderation.

Whether he do more hate sin, or the evil spirit that suggests it, is a question.

Earthly contents are too mean grounds, whereon to raise his joy: these, as he balks not when they meet him in his way, so he doth not too eagerly pursue: he may taste of them; but so, as he would rather fast, than surfeit.

He is not insensible of those losses, which casualty or enmity may inflict: but that, which lies most heavily upon his heart, is his sin. This makes his sleep short and troublesome; his meals stomachless; his recreations listless; his every thing, tedious; till he find his soul acquitted by his great Surety in heaven: which done, he feels more peace and pleasure in his calm, then he found horror in the tempest.

His heart is the storehouse of most precious graces. That Faith, whereby his soul is established, triumphs over the world, whether it allure or threaten; and bids defiance to all the powers of darkness, not fearing to be foiled by any opposition. His Hope cannot be discouraged with the greatest difficulties; but bears up against natural impossibilities, and knows how to reconcile contradictions. His Charity is both extensive and fervent; barring out no one, that bears the face of a man; but pouring out itself upon the household of faith: that studies good constructions of men and actions; and keeps itself free, both from suspicion and censure.

Grace doth more exalt him, than his humility depresses him. Were it not for that Christ who dwells in him, he could think himself the meanest of all creatures: now, he knows he may not disparage the Deity of him, by whom he is so gloriously inhabited; in whose only right, he can be as great in his own thoughts, as he is despicable in the eyes of the world.

He is wise to Godward, however it be with him for the world: and, well knowing he cannot serve two masters, he cleaves to the better; making choice of that good part, which cannot be taken from him: not so much regarding to get that, which he cannot keep; as to possess himself of that good, which he cannot lose.

He is just in all his dealings with men; hating to thrive by injury and oppression: and will rather leave behind something of his own, than filch from another's heap.

He is not closefisted, where there is just occasion of his distribution; willingly parting with those metals, which he regards only for use; not caring for either their colour or substance: earth is to him no other than itself, in what hue soever it appeareth.

In every good cause, he is bold as a lion; and can neither fear faces, nor shrink at dangers: and is rather heartened with opposition; pressing so much the more, where he finds a large door open, and many adversaries; and, when he must suffer, doth as resolutely stoop, as he did before valiantly resist.

He is holily temperate in the use of all God's blessings; as knowing, by whom they are given, and to what end: neither dares either to mis-lay them, or to mis-spend them lavishly; as duly weighing upon what terms he receives them, and fore-expecting an account.

Such a hand doth he carry upon his pleasures and delights, that they run not away with him: he knows how to slacken the reins, without a debauched kind of dissoluteness; and how to straiten them, without a sullen rigour.

SECT. II.

HIS EXPENCE OF THE DAY.

He lives as a man, that hath borrowed his time, and challenges not to be owner of it; caring to SPEND THE DAY in a gracious and well governed thrift.

His first morning's task, after he hath lifted up his heart to that God who gives his beloved sleep, shall be to put himself in a due posture, wherein to entertain himself and the whole day: which shall be done, if he shall effectually work his thoughts to a right apprehension of his God, of himself, of all that may concern him.

The true posture of a Christian then, is this. He sees still heaven open to him; and beholds and admires the light inaccessible: he sees the all-glorious God ever before him; the angels of God about him; the evil spirits aloof off, enviously groaning and repining at him; the world under his feet, willing to rebel, but forced to be subject; the good creatures ready to tender their service to him: and is accordingly affected to all these. He sees heaven open, with joy and desire of fruition: he sees God, with an adoring awfulness: he sees the angels, with a thankful acknowledgment, and care not to offend them: he sees the evil spirits, with hatred and watchful indignation: he sees the world, with a holy imperiousness; commanding it for use, and scorning to stoop to it for observance: lastly, he sees the good creatures, with gratulation, and care to improve them to the advantage of him that lent them.

Having thus gathered up his thoughts and found where he is, he may now be fit for his constant devotion; which he falls upon, not without a trembling veneration of that Infinite and Incomprehensible Majesty, before whom he is prostrate: now he climbs up into that heaven, which he before did but behold; and solemnly pours out his soul, in hearty thanksgivings and humble supplications, into the bosom of the Almighty: wherein his awe is so tempered with his faith, that, while he labours under the sense of his own vileness, he is raised up in the confidence of an infinite mercy. Now he renews his feeling interest in the Lord Jesus Christ, his blessed Redeemer; and labours to get, in every breath, new pledges of his

gracious entireness: so seasoning his heart with these early thoughts of piety, as that they stick by him all the day after.

Having thus begun with his God and begged his blessing, he now finds time to address himself to the works of his calling.

To live without any vocation, to live in an unwarrantable vocation, not to labour in the vocation wherein he lives, are things which his soul hateth. These businesses of his calling therefore, he follows with a willing and contented industry: not as forced to it by the necessity of human laws, or as urged by the law of necessity out of the sense or fear of want, nor yet, contrarily, out of an eager desire of enriching himself in his estate; but in a conscionable obedience to that God, who hath made man to labour as the sparks to fly upward, and hath laid it upon him both as a punishment and charge, *In the sweat of thy brows shalt thou eat thy bread.*

In an humble alacrity he walks on in the way, wherein his God hath set him: yet not the while so intent upon his hands, as not to tend his heart; which he lifts up in frequent ejaculations to that God, to whom he desires to be approved in all his endeavours; ascribing all the thanks, both of his ability and success, to that omnipotent hand. If he meet with any rubs of difficulty in his way, he knows who sent them, and who can remove them: not neglecting any prudential means of remedy, he is not to seek for a higher redress.

If he have occasion of trading with others, his will may not be the rule of his gain; but his conscience: neither dares he strive for what he can get; but what he ought. Equity is here the Clerk of the Market; and the measure, which he would have others mete out to himself, is the standard whereby he desires to be tried in his mensurations to all other. He hates to hoist prices, upon occasion of his neighbour's need; and to take the advantage of forfeits, by the clock. He is not such a slave to his trade, as not to spare an hour to his soul: neither dares he be so lavish, as utterly to neglect his charge, upon whatever pretence of pleasure or devotion.

Shortly, he takes his work at the hand of God, and leaves it with him; humbly offering up his services to his great Master in Heaven; and, after all his labour, sits comfortably down in the conscience of having faithfully done his task, though not without the intervention of many infirmities.

SECT. III.

HIS RECREATIONS.

His recreations (for even these human frailty will sometimes call for) are such, as may be meet relaxations to a mind over-bent, and a body tired with honest and holy employments; safe, inoffensive, and for time and measure fitly proportioned to the occasion: like

unto soft music, betwixt two long and stirring Acts: like unto some quick and savoury sauce, to a listless and cloyed stomach: like unto a sweet nap, after an overwatching.

He is far from those delights, that may effeminate or corrupt the mind; abhorring to sit by those pleasures, from which he shall not rise better.

He hates to turn pastime into trade; not abiding to spend more time in whetting, than till his edge be sharp. In the height of his delectations, he knows to enjoy God; from whom as he fetches his allowance, so he craves and expects a gracious acceptation, even when he lets himself most loose. And if, at any time, he have gone beyond his measure, he chides himself for the excess; and is so much the more careful, ever after, to keep within compass.

He can only make a kind of use of those contentments, wherein light minds are transported: and can manage his disports without passion; and leave, a loser, without regret.

A smile, to him, is as much as a loud laughter, to the worldling: neither doth he entertain mirth as his ordinary attendant; but as his retainer, to wait upon his serious occasions: and, finally, so rejoiceth, as if he rejoiced not.

SECT. IV.

HIS MEALS.

His meals are such, as nature requires, and grace moderates; not pinching himself with a penurious niggardliness, nor pampering himself with a wanton excess. His plate is the least part of his care: so as his fare may be wholesome, he stands not upon delicacy.

He dares not put his hand to the dish, till he have looked up to the Owner; and hates to put one morsel into his mouth, unblessed; and knows it his duty to give thanks for what he hath paid for: as well considering, that neither the meat that he eats, nor the hand and mouth that receives it, nor the maw that digests it, nor the metal that buys it, is of his own making.

And now, having fed his belly, not his eye, he rises from his board satisfied, not glutted; and so bestirs himself upon his calling, as a man not more unwieldy by his repast but more cheerful, and as one that would be loth his gut should be any hinderance to his brain or to his hand.

If he shall have occasion to entertain himself and his friends more liberally, he dares not lose himself and his feast. He can be soberly merry, and wisely free: only in this he is willing not to be his own man, in that he gives himself for the time to his guests. His caterer is friendly thrift; and temperance keeps the board's end, and carves to every one the best measure of enough.

As for his own diet when he is invited to a tempting variety, he puts his knife to his throat: neither dares he feed without fear; as knowing who overlooks him.

Obscenity, detraction, scurrility are barred from his table: neither do any words sound there, that are less savoury than the dishes.

Lastly, he so feeds, as if he sought for health in those viands, and not pleasure; as if he did eat, to live: and rises, not more replenished with food, than with thankfulness.

SECT. V.

HIS NIGHT'S REST.

In a due season he betakes himself to his REST. He presumes not to alter the ordinance of day and night; nor dares confound, where distinction is made by his Maker.

It is not with him as with the brute creatures, that have nothing to look after, but the mere obedience of nature. He doth not, therefore, lay himself down, as the swine in the sty, or a dog in the kennel, without any further preface to his desired sleep; but improves those faculties, which he is now closing up, to a meet preparation for a holy repose.

For which purpose, he, first, casts back his eye to the now-expired day, and seriously considers how he hath spent it; and will be sure to make his reckonings even with his God, before he part. Then, he lifts up his eyes and his heart to that God, who hath made the night for man to rest in, and recommends himself earnestly to his blessed protection; and then closeth his eyes in peace, not without a serious meditation of his last rest: his bed represents to him his grave; his linen, his winding-sheet; his sleep, death; the night, the many days of darkness: and, shortly, he so composeth his soul, as if he looked not to wake till the morning of the Resurrection.

After which, if he sleep, he is thankfully cheerful; if he sleep not, his reins chasten and instruct him in the night season; and, if sleep be out of his eyes, yet God and his angels are not: whensoever he awakes, in those hands he finds himself; and therefore rests sweetly, even when he sleeps not. His very dreams, however vain or troublesome, are not to him altogether unprofitable, for they serve to bewray, not only his bodily temper, but his spiritual weaknesses, which his waking resolutions shall endeavour to correct.

He so applies himself to his pillow, as a man that meant not to be drowned in sleep, but refreshed: not limiting his rest, by the insatiable lust of a sluggish and drowzy stupidness; but by the exigence of his health, and habilitation to his calling: and rises from it, not too late, with more appetite to his work, than to a second slumber; cheerfully devoting the strength renewed by his late rest, to the honour and service of the Giver.

SECT. VI.

HIS CARRIAGE.

His CARRIAGE is not strange, insolent, surly, and overly contemptuous; but familiarly meek, humble, courteous: as knowing what mould he is made of; and not knowing any worse man, than himself.

He hath a hand ready upon every occasion to be helpful to his neighbour; as if he thought himself made to do good. He hates to sell his breath to his friend, where his advice may be useful: neither is more ambitious of any thing under heaven, than of doing good offices.

It is his happiness, if he can reconcile quarrels, and make peace between dissenting friends.

When he is chosen an Umpire, he will be sure to cut even betwixt both parties; and commonly displeaseth both, that he may wrong neither.

If he be called forth to Magistracy, he puts off all private interests; and commands friendship to give place to justice. Now he knows no cousins, no enemies; neither cousins for favour, nor enemies for revenge: but looks right forward to the cause, without squinting aside to the persons. No flattery can keep him from browbeating of vice: no fear can work him to discourage virtue. Where severity is requisite, he hates to enjoy another's punishment; and where mercy may be more prevalent, he hates to use severity. Power doth not render him imperious and oppressive; but rather humbles him, in the awful expectation of his account.

If he be called to the honour of God's Embassy to his people, he dares not but be faithful in delivering that sacred message. He cannot now, either fear faces, or respect persons. It is equally odious to him, to hide and smother any of God's counsel, and to foist in any of his own; to suppress truth, and to adulterate it. He speaks not himself, but Christ; and labours, not to tickle the ear, but to save souls. So doth he go before his flock, as one, that means to feed them no less by his example, than by his doctrine; and would condemn himself, if he did not live the Gospel, as well as preach it. He is neither too austere in his retiredness, nor too good-cheap in his sociableness: but carries so even a hand, that his discreet affableness may be free from contempt; and that he may win his people, with a loving conversation. If any of his charge be miscarried into an error of opinion, he labours to reclaim him, by the spirit of meekness; so as the mis-guided may read nothing but love, in his zealous conviction. If any be drawn into a vicious course of life, he fetches him back with a gentle, yet powerful hand: by a holy importunity, working the offender to a sense of his own danger, and to a saving penitence.

Is he the Master of a Family? he dares not be a lion in his own house; cruelly tyrannizing over his meanest drudge: but, so moderately exercises his power, as knowing himself to be his appren-

tice's fellow-servant. He is the mouth of his meiny to God, in his daily devotions; offering up for them the calves of his lips, in his morning and evening sacrifice: and the mouth of God unto them, in his wholesome instructions, and all holy admonitions. He goes before them, in good examples of piety and holy conversation; and so governs, as one, that hath more than mere bodies committed to his charge.

Is he the Husband of a wife? he carres his yoke even: not laying too much weight upon the weaker neck. His helper argues him the principal; and he so knows it, that he makes a wise use of his just inequality: so remembering himself to be the superior, as that he can be no other than one flesh. He maintains, therefore, his moderate authority, with a conjugal love: so holding up the right of his sex, that, in the mean time, he doth not violently clash with the brittler vessel. As his choice was not made by weight, or by the voice, or by the hue of the hide; but for pure affection grounded upon virtue: so the same regards hold him close to a constant continuance of his chaste love; which can never yield, either to change or intermission.

Is he a Father of children? he looks upon them as more God's, than his own; and governs them accordingly. He knows it is only their worse part, which they have received from his loins: their diviner half is from the Father of Lights, and is now become the main part of his charge. As God gave them to him, and to the world by him: so his chief care is, that they may be begotten again to God; that they may put off that corrupt nature which they took from him, and be made partakers of that divine nature which is given them in their regeneration. For this cause, he trains them up in all virtuous and religious education: he sets them in their way, corrects their exorbitances, restrains their wild desires, and labours to frame them to all holy dispositions; and so bestows his fatherly care upon and for them, as one, that would rather they should be good than rich, and would wish them rather dead than debauched. He neglects not all honest means of their provision, but the highest point he aims at, is to leave God their patrimony. In the choice of their calling or match, he propounds, but forces not; as knowing they have also wills of their own, which it is fitter for him to bow, then to break.

Is he a Son? he is such as may be fit to proceed from such loins.

Is he a Servant? he cannot but be officious; for he must please two masters, though one under, not against the other: when his visible master sees him not, he knows he cannot be out of the eye of the Invisible; and therefore dares not be either negligent, or unfaithful. The work, that he undertakes, he goes through, not out of fear, but out of conscience; and would do his business no otherwise than well, though he served a blind master. He is no blab of the defects at home; and, where he cannot defend, is ready to excuse. He yields patiently to a just reproof; and answers with an humble silence: and is more careful not to deserve, than to avoid stripes.

Is he a Subject? He is awfully affected to sovereignty; as knowing by whom the powers are ordained. He dares not curse the king; no, not in his thought; nor revile the ruler of his people, though justly faulty: much less dare he slander the footsteps of God's anointed. He submits, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake, to every ordinance of God; yea, to every ordinance of man, for the Lord's sake: not daring to disobey, in regard of the oath of God. If he have reached forth his hand to cut off but the skirt of the royal robe, his heart smites him. He is a true paymaster; and willingly renders tribute to whom tribute, custom to whom custom, honour to whom honour is due; and justly divides his duties, betwixt God and Cæsar.

Finally, in whatever relation he stands, he is diligent, faithful, conscionable; observant of his rule; and careful to be approved such, both to God and men.

SECT. VII.

HIS RESOLUTION IN MATTER OF RELIGION.

He hath fully informed himself of all the necessary points of RELIGION; and is so firmly grounded in those fundamental and saving truths, that he cannot be carried about with every wind of doctrine. As for collateral and unmaterial verities, he neither despiseth, nor yet doth too eagerly pursue them.

He lists not to take opinions upon trust: neither dares absolutely follow any guide; but those, who he knows could not err.

He is ever suspicious of new faces of theological truths; and cannot think it safe, to walk in untrodden paths.

Matters of speculation are not unwelcome to him; but his chief care is to reduce his knowledge to practice: and, therefore, he holds nothing his own, but what his heart hath appropriated, and his life acted.

He dares not be too much wedded to his own conceit; and hath so much humility, as to think the whole Church of Christ upon earth wiser than himself.

However he be a great lover of constancy, yet, upon better reason, he can change his mind, in some litigious and unimporting truths; and can be silent, where he must dissent.

SECT. VIII.

HIS DISCOURSE.

His DISCOURSE is grave, discreet, pertinent; free from vanity, free from offence.

In secular occasions, nothing falls from him but seasonable and

well-advised truths; in spiritual, his speech is such, as both argues grace and works it.

No foul and unsavoury breath proceeds out of his lips; which he abides not to be tainted with any rotten communication, with any slanderous detraction. If, in a friendly merriment, he let his tongue loose to a harmless urbanity, that is the furthest he dares go; scorning to come within the verge of a base scurrility.

He is not apt to spend himself in censures; but, as for revilings and cursed speakings against God or men, those his soul abhorreth.

He knows to reserve his thoughts, by locking them up in his bosom, under a safe silence: and, when he must speak, dares not be too free of his tongue; as well knowing, that, *in the multitude of words, there wanteth not sin.*

His speeches are no other than seasonable; and well fitted, both to the person and occasion. Jiggs at a funeral, lamentations at a feast, holy counsel to scorners, discouragements to the dejected, and applauses to the profane, are hateful to him.

He meddles not with other men's matters, much less with affairs of state: but keeps himself wisely within his own compass; not thinking his breath well spent, where he doth not either teach or learn.

SECT. IX.

HIS DEVOTION.

He is so perpetually resident in heaven, that he is, often in every day, before the Throne of Grace; and he never comes there, without supplication in his hand: wherein also he loves to be importunate: and he speeds accordingly; for he never departs empty; while other cold suitors, that come thither but in some good fits of devotion, obtain nothing but denials.

He dares not press to God's footstool in his own name: he is conscious enough of his own unworthiness: but he comes in the gracious and powerful Name of his Righteous Mediator, in whom he knows he cannot but be accepted; and, in an humble boldness, for his only sake craves mercy.

No man is either more awful or more confident.

When he hath put up his petition to the King of Heaven, he presumes not to stint the time or manner of God's condescent; but patiently and faithfully waits for the good hour, and leaves himself upon that Infinite Wisdom and Goodness.

He doth not affect length so much, as fervor: neither so much minds his tongue, as his heart.

His prayers are suited according to the degrees of the benefits sued for. He, therefore, begs grace absolutely, and temporal blessings with limitation; and is accordingly affected in the grant.

Neither is he more earnest in craving mercies, than he is zealously desirous to be retributory to God when he hath received them;

not more heartily suing to be rich in grace, than to improve his graces to the honour and advantage of the Bestower.

With an awful and broken heart, doth he make his addresses to that Infinite Majesty; from whose presence he returns with comfort and joy.

His soul is constantly fixed there, whither he pours it out. Distraction and distrust are shut out from his closet: and he is so taken up with his devotion, as one that makes it his work to pray. And, when he hath offered up his sacrifices unto God, his faith listens, and looks in at the door of heaven to know how they are taken.

SECT. X.

HIS SUFFERINGS.

EVERY man shews fair in prosperity; but the main trial of the Christian is in SUFFERING: any man may steer in a good gale and clear sea; but the mariner's skill will be seen in a tempest.

Herein the Christian goes beyond the Pagan's, not practice only, but admiration. *We rejoice in tribulation*, saith the Chosen Vessel. Lo here a point transcending all the affectation of Heathenism. Perhaps, some resolute spirit, whether out of a natural fortitude, or out of an ambition of fame or earthly glory, may set a face upon a patient enduring of loss or pain; but never any of those heroic Gentiles durst pretend to a joy in suffering. Hither can Christian courage reach: knowing, that *Tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed.*

Is he bereaved of his goods and worldly estate? he comforts himself in the conscience of a better treasure, that can never be lost. Is he afflicted with sickness? his comfort is, that the inward man is so much more renewed daily, as the outward perisheth. Is he slandered and unjustly disgraced? his comfort is, that there is a blessing which will more than make him amends. Is he banished? he knows he is on his way homeward. Is he imprisoned? his spirit cannot be locked in: God and his Angels cannot be locked out. Is he dying? to him *to live is Christ, and to die is gain.* Is he dead? he *rests from his labours*, and is crowned with glory. Shortly, he is perfect gold, that comes more pure out of the fire, than it went in; neither had ever been so great a Saint in heaven, if he had not passed through the flames of his trial here upon earth.

SECT. XI.

HIS CONFLICTS.

HE knows himself never out of danger; and, therefore, stands ever upon his guard. Neither of his hands is empty: the one holds out

the shield of faith; the other manageth *the sword of the Spirit*: both of them are employed in his perpetual CONFLICT.

He cannot be weary of resisting; but resolves to die fighting.

He hath a ward for every blow: and, as his eye is quick to discern temptations; so is his hand, and foot, nimble to avoid them.

He cannot be discouraged with either the number or power of his enemies: knowing that his strength is out of himself, in him in whom he can do all things; and that there can be no match to the Almighty.

He is careful, not to give advantage to his vigilant adversary; and, therefore, warily avoids the occasions of sin: and if, at any time, he be overtaken with the suddenness or subtlety of temptation, he speedily recovers himself by a serious repentance; and fights so much the harder, because of his foil.

He hates to take quarter of the spiritual powers: nothing less than death can put an end to his quarrel, nor nothing below victory.

SECT. XII.

HIS DEATH.

HE is not so careful to keep his soul within his teeth, as to send it forth well addressed for happiness: as knowing, therefore, the last brunt to be most violent, he rouzeth up his holy fortitude to encounter that king of fear, his last enemy, DEATH.

And now, after a painful sickness and a resolute expectation of the fiercest assault, it falls out with him as in the meeting of the two hostile brothers, Jacob and Esau: instead of grappling, he finds a courteous salutation; for stabs, kisses; for height of enmity, offices of love. Life could never befriend him, so much as death offers to do: that tenders him (perhaps a rough, but) a sure hand, to lead him to glory; and receives a welcome accordingly.

Neither is there any cause to marvel at the change. The Lord of Life hath wrought it; he, having by dying subdued death, hath reconciled it to his own; and hath, as it were, beaten it into these fair terms with all the members of his mystical body: so as, while unto the enemies of God death is still no other than a terrible executioner of divine vengeance, he is to all that are in Christ a plausible and sure convoy unto blessedness.

The Christian therefore, now laid upon his last bed, when this grim messenger comes to fetch him to heaven, looks not so much at his dreadful visage, as at his happy errand: and is willing not to remember what death is in itself, but what it is to us in Christ; by whom it is made so useful and beneficial, that we could not be happy without it.

Here, then, comes in the last act and employment of faith; for after this brunt passed, there is no more use of faith, but of vision: that heartens the soul in a lively apprehension of that Blessed Sa-

viour, who both led him the way of suffering, and is making way for him to everlasting glory: that shews him *Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our Faith, who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right-hand of the throne of God:* that clings close unto him: and lays unremovable hold upon his person, his merits, his blessedness. Upon the wings of this Faith, is the soul ready to mount up toward that heaven, which is open to receive it; and, in that act of evolation, puts itself into the hands of those blessed angels, who are ready to carry it up to the throne of glory.

SIC, O SIC JUVAT VIVERE, SIC PERIRE!

SATAN'S FIERY DARTS QUENCHED:

OR,

TEMPTATIONS REPELLED.

IN THREE DECADES.

FOR THE HELP, COMFORT, AND PRESERVATION OF WEAK CHRISTIANS, IN THESE DANGEROUS TIMES OF ERROR AND SEDUCTION.

BY JOSEPH, BISHOP OF NORWICH.

TO THE CHRISTIAN READER,

GRACE AND PEACE.

SOME few months are past, since a worthy and eminent Divine from the west, once part of my charge, earnestly moved me to undertake this task of Temptations; seconding his Letters with the lines of a dear intercessor from those parts.*

Upon the first view, I slighted the motion: returning only this answer, That I remembered this work was already so completely performed by the reverend and learned Mr. Downame, in his "Christian Warfare," as that whoso should meddle with this subject, should but seem to glean after his sickle.

But, when I had sadly considered the matter, my second thoughts told me, that there is no one point of Divinity, wherein many pens have not profitably laboured in several forms of discourse; and that the course, which I was solicited unto, was in a quite different way of tractation, namely, to furnish my fellow-christians with short and punctual answers to the particular suggestions of our great enemy; and that our deplored Age had rifely yielded public temptations of impiety, which durst not look forth into the world in those happy days. I was, thereupon, soon convinced in myself, how useful and beneficial such a Tractate might be to weak souls; and embraced the motion, as sent from God, whose good hand I found sensibly with me in the pursuance of it.

I, therefore, cheerfully addressed myself to the work: wherein what I have assayed or done, I humbly leave to the judgment of others; with only this, that if in this Treatise my decrepit hand can have let fall any thing that may be to the service of God's Church, to the raising up of drooping hearts, to the convincing of blasphemous errors, to the preventing of the dangerous insinuations of wickedness, I desire to be thankful to my good God, whose grace hath been pleased to improve those few sands that remain in my glass to so happy an advantage. That God, the Father of all Mercies, fetch from these poor labours of his weak servant much glory to his own Name, and much benefit to the souls of his people.

And may the same God be pleased to stir up the hearts of all his faithful ones, that shall, through his goodness, receive any help by these well-meant endeavours, to interchange their prayers with and for me, the unworthiest of his Ministers, that I may finish the small remainder of my course with joy. Amen.

From my Cottage at Higham,
near Norwich: Feb. 12, 1646.

* Mr. Hannibal Gammon, of Cornwall.

TEMPTATIONS REPELLED.

THE FIRST DECADE.

TEMPTATIONS OF IMPIETY.

1st. TEMPTATION:

"*Foolish sinner, thou leanest upon a broken reed while thou reposest all thy trust in a Crucified Saviour:*" Repelled.

Blasphemous Spirit! It is not the ignominy of the Cross, that can blemish the honour of my Saviour. Thou feelest, to thy endless pain and regret, that he, who would die upon the tree of shame, hath triumphed victoriously over death and all the powers of hell. The greater his abasement was, the greater is the glory of his mercy. He, that is the Eternal God, would put on man, that he might work man's redemption, and satisfy God for man. Who, but a man, could suffer? and who, but a God, could conquer by sufferings? It is man, that had sinned: it is God, that was offended: who, but he, that was God and man, could reconcile God unto man? *He was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth,* and triumpheth, *in the power of his,* omnipotent, *Godhead;* 2 Cor. xiii. 4. Neither was it so much weakness to yield unto death, as it was power to vanquish it. Yea, in this very dying, there was strength: for here was no violence that could force him into his grave: who should offer it? *I and the Father are one,* saith that Word of Truth; and in Unity there can be no constraint: and, if the persons be divers; *He thought it no robbery to be equal with God,* the Father; Phil. ii. 6. and there is no authority over equals. And, for men or devils, what could they do to the Lord of Life? *I lay down my life,* saith the Almighty Redeemer, *that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again:* John x. 17, 18. O infiniteness, both of power and mercy, met in the centre of a willing death!

Impudent Tempter, dost thou not remember thine own language? The time was, indeed, when thou couldst say, *If thou be the Son of God;* Matt. iv. 3, 6: but, when thou foundest thyself quelled by divine power, and sawest those miraculous works fall from him which were only proper to an Infinite Godhead; now thou wert

forced to confess, *I know who thou art, even the Holy One of God*; Mark i. 24: and, again, *Jesus, the Son of the Most High God*; Mark v. 7: and, yet again, *What have we to do with thee, Jesus, the Son of God? art thou come to torment us before the time?* Matt. viii. 29. Lo then, even in the time of his human weakness, thou couldst, with horror enough, acknowledge him the Son of the Most High God: and darest thou, now that he sits crowned with celestial glory, disparage his Ever-Blessed Deity?

Thy malice hath raised up, as in the former, so in these latter days, certain cursed imps of heretical pravity; who, under the name of Christians, have wickedly *re-crucified the Lord that bought them*; not sparing to call into question the Eternal Deity of him, whom they dare call Saviour: whom if thou hadst not steeled with a hellish impudence, certainly, they could not profess to admit the Word written, and yet, the while, deny the Personal Word. How clear testimony doth the one of them give to the other! When thou presumedst to set upon the Son of God by thy personal temptations, he stopt thy mouth with a *scriptum est*: how much more shall these Pseudo-Christian agents of thine be thus convinced!

Surely, there is no truth, wherein those oracles of God have been more clear and punctual.

Are we not there required to believe in him as God, upon the promise of eternal life; John iii. 16: under the pain of everlasting condemnation? v. 18. Are we not commanded to baptize in his name, as God? Matt. xxviii. 19. Acts ii. 38. Is not the Holy Ghost given as a seal to that baptism? Acts x. 47, 48. Are we not charged to give divine honour to him? Ps. xxii. 27. Is not this required and reported to be done not only by the kings of the earth; Psalm lxxii. 11, 15: but by the saints and angels in heaven? Rev. v. 11, 12. and iv. 9, 10, 11. Is he not there declared to be *equal with God?* Phil. ii. 6. Is he not there asserted to be one with the Father? John x. 30. 1 John v. 7. Doth he not there challenge a joint right with the Father in all things, both in heaven and earth? John xvi. 15. xvii. 10.

Are not the great works of divine power attributed to him? Hath not he created the earth, and man upon it? Have not his hands stretched out the heavens? Hath not he commanded all their host? Isa. xlv. 12. Ps. xxxiii. 6. and cii. 25.

Are not all the attributes of God, his? Is he not eternal? Is it not he, of whom the Psalmist, *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre?* Ps. xlv. 6. Is not he the *Father of Eternity?* Isa. ix. 6: the *First and Last?* Rev. i. 17: Have not *his goings forth been from everlasting?* Mic. v. 2. Had not he *glory with the Father, before the world was?* John xvii. 5. Is not he the *Word, which was in the beginning; the Word, that was with God; and the Word, that was God?* John i. 1. Is he not infinite and incomprehensible? Is it not he that *filleth all things?* Eph. iv. 10: that was in heaven, while he was on earth? John iii. 13. Is he not *Almighty?* Rev. i. 8. even the *Mighty*

God, who *upholds all things by the word of his power*? Isa. ix. 6. Yea, is he not expressly styled *the Lord, Jehovah; the Lord of Hosts; God blessed for ever; the true God, and eternal life; the great God and Saviour; the Lord of Glory*? Isa. xl. 3. xlv. 21, 22, 13. vi. 3. Rom. ix. 5. 1 John v. 20. Tit. ii. 13. 1 Cor. ii. 8.

Hath he not abundantly convinced the world of his Godhead, by those miraculous works which he did, both in his own person while he was here on earth, and by the hands of his followers? works so transcending the possibility of nature, that they could not be wrought by any less than the God of Nature: as, ejecting of devils, by command; raising the dead, after degrees of putrefaction; giving eyes to the born blind; conquering death, in his own resuscitation; ascending gloriously into heaven; charming the winds and waters; healing diseases, by the very shadow of his transient disciples?

Yea, tell me, by what power was it, that thine oracles, whereby all the world was held in superstition, were silenced? what power, whereby the Gospel, so opposite to flesh and blood, hath conquered the world; and, in spite of all the violence of tyrants and oppugnation of rebellious nature, hath prevailed?

Upon all these grounds, how can I do less, than cry out, with the late-believing disciple, *My Lord, and my God*? John xx. 28.

Malignant Spirit, thou dost but set a face of checking me by my Saviour's Cross. Thou knowest and feelest, that it was the chariot of his triumph, whereupon being exalted, he dragged all the powers of hell captive after him; making a show of them openly, to their confusion, and his glory; Col. ii. 15. Thou knowest, that, had it not been for that Cross, those infernal regions of thine had been peopled with whole mankind; a great part whereof is now delivered out of thy hands, by that victorious redemption. Never had heaven been so stored, never had hell been so foiled, if it had not been for that Cross.

And canst thou think to daunt me with the mention of that Cross, which, by the eternal decree of God, was determined to be the means of the deliverance of all the souls of the elect? Dost thou not hear the Prophet say, of old, *He was cut off from the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death. He hath poured out his soul unto death, and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many*? Isa. liii. 8, 9, 12. Didst thou not hear my Saviour himself, after his glorious resurrection, checking Cleopas and his fellow-traveller, for their ignorance of this predetermination? *O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory*? Luke xxiv. 25, 26.

Yea, lastly, when had my Saviour more glory, than in this very act of his ignominious suffering and crucifixion? It is true, there hangs the Son of Man, despicably upon the tree of shame: he is mocked, spit upon, buffeted, scourged, nailed, reviled, dead; Luke xxiii. 35, 36. now have men and devils done their worst: but, this

while, is the Son of God acknowledged and magnified in his almighty power, both by earth and heaven. The sun, for three hours, hides his head in darkness; as hating to behold this tort offered to his Creator: the earth quakes to bear the weight of this suffering: the rocks rend in pieces: the dead rise from their graves to see, and wonder at, and attend their late dying, and now risen Saviour: the vail of the Temple tears from the top to the bottom, for the blasphemous indignity offered to the God of the Temple: and the Centurion, upon sight of all this, is forced to say, *Truly, this was the Son of God;* Matt. xxvii. 50—54.

And now, after all these irrefragable attestations, his Easter makes abundant amends for his passion. There could not be so much weakness in dying, as there was power in rising from death. His resurrection proves him the Lord of Life and Death: and shews that he died, not out of necessity, but will; since he, that could shake off the grave, could with more ease have avoided death. Oh, then, the happy and glorious conquest of my Blessed Saviour, *declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of Holiness, by the resurrection from the dead!* Rom. i. 4.

Go now, Wicked Spirit, and twit me with the Cross of my Saviour. That, which thou objectedst to me as my shame, is my only glory: *God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of my Lord Jesus Christ; whereby the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world;* Gal. vi. 14.

IID. TEMPTATION:

"*Still thou hast, upon all occasions, recourse to the Scriptures, as some Divine Oracles; and thinkest thou mayest safely build thy soul upon every text of that written word, as inspired from heaven: whereas, indeed, this is nothing but a human device to keep men in awe; and never came nearer heaven, than the brains of those politicians that invented it:*" Repelled.

WICKED Spirit! when thou presumedst personally to tempt my Saviour, and hadst that cursed mouth stopped by him with an *It is written*, thou daredst not then to raise such a blasphemous suggestion against this word of truth. Success in wickedness hath made thee more impudent; and now, thou art bold to strike despitefully at the very root of religion. But know, that, after all thy malicious detractions, this word shall stand, when heaven and earth shall vanish; and is that, whereby both thou and all thy complices shall be judged at that great day.

It is not more sure that there is a God, than that this God ought to be served and worshipped by the creature. Neither is it more sure that God is, than that he is most wise, most just, most holy. This most wise, just, and holy God, then, requiring and expecting to be served and worshipped by his creature, must of necessity have imparted his will to his creature; how and in what manner

he would be served; and what he would have man to believe, concerning himself and his proceedings: else, man should be left to utter uncertainties; and there should be a failing of those ends, which the Infinite Wisdom and Justice hath proposed to itself.

There must be therefore some word of God, wherein he hath revealed himself to man: and that this is and must be acknowledged to be that only word, it is clear and evident; for that there neither was, nor is, nor can be any other word, that could or durst stand in competition or rivality with this word of the Eternal God: and, if any other have presumed to offer a contestation, it hath soon vanished into contempt and shame. Moreover, this is the only word, which God owns for his; under no less style than *Thus saith the Lord:* which the Son of God hath so acknowledged for the genuine word of his Eternal Father, as that out of it, as such, he hath pleased to refell both thy suggestions, and the malicious arguments of his Jewish opposites.

It drives wholly at the glory of God; not sparing to disparage those very persons, whose pens are employed in it, in blazoning their own infirmities in what they have offended: which could not have been, if those pens had not been guided by a higher hand. It discovers and oppugns the corruptions of nature, which to mere men are either hid; or, if revealed, are cherished and upheld. It lays forth the misery and danger of our estate under sin, and the remedies and means of our deliverance, which no other word hath ever pretended to undertake.

Besides that there is such a majesty in the style wherein it is written, as is unimitable by any human author whatsoever, the matter of it is wholly divine; aiming altogether at purity of worship and integrity of life: not admitting of any the least mixture, either of idolatry and superstition, or of any plausible enormities of life; but impartially laying forth God's judgments against these, and whatever other wickednesses.

This word reveals those things, which never could be known to the world, by any human skill or industry; as the creation of the world; and the order and decrees of it; and the course of God's administration of it from the beginning, thousands of years before any records of history were extant: as it was only the Spirit of the Most High God in Daniel, that could fetch back and give an account of a vision fore-passed: all the soothsayers and magicians confess this a work of no less than divine omniscience.

And, as for things future, the predictions of this word of things to be done after many hundreds, yea some thousands of years, the events having then no preexistence in their causes, being accordingly accomplished, show it to proceed from an absolute, unfailing, and therefore infinite prescience.

And, whereas there are two parts of this word, the Law and the Gospel: the Law is more exact than human brains can reach unto; meeting with those aberrations, which the most wise and curious lawgivers could not give order for; extending itself to those very thoughts, which nature knows not to accuse or restrain: the Gospel

is made good, as by the signs and wonders wrought in all the primitive ages; so by the powerful operation that it hath upon the soul, such, as the word of the most prudent man on earth, or of the greatest angel in heaven should in vain hope to parallel. And, whereas the penmen of both these were Prophets and Apostles: the Prophets are sufficiently attested by the Apostles, to be men holy, and inspired by the Holy Ghost; 2 Pet. i. 21: the Apostles are abundantly attested by the Holy Ghost poured out upon them in their Pentecost; and, besides variety of tongues, enabling them to do such miraculous works, as astonished and convinced their very enemies. To these may be added the perfect harmony of the Law and the Gospel; the Law being a prefigured Gospel, and the Gospel a Law consummate: both of them lively setting forth Christ, the Redeemer of the World, both future and exhibited.

Neither is it lightly to be esteemed, that this word hath been by holy men in all ages received as of sacred and divine authority: men, whose lives and deaths have approved them eminent Saints of God; who have not only professed, but sealed with their blood, this truth, which they had learned from him, that was rapt into the third heaven, that *all scripture is given by inspiration of God*; 2 Tim. iii. 16. a truth which cannot but be attested by their own hearts, which have sensibly found the power of this word, convincing them of sin; working effectually in them a lively faith and unfeigned conversion, which no human means could ever have effected.

Lastly, it is a strong evidence to my soul, that this is no other than the word of a God, that I find it so eagerly opposed by thee, and all thy malignant instruments in all ages. Philosophers, both natural and moral and politic, have left large volumes behind them, in their several professions; all which are suffered to live in peace, and to enjoy their opinions with freedom and leave: but, so soon as ever this sacred book of God looks forth into the world, hell is in an uproar, and raises all the forces of malice and wit and violence against it. Wherefore would it be thus, if there were not some more divine thing in these holy leaves, than in all the monuments of learned humanity? But the protection is yet more convictive than the opposition: that, notwithstanding all the machinations of the powers of darkness, this word is preserved entire; that the simplicity of it prevails against all worldly policy; that the power of it subdues all nations, and triumphs over all the wickedness of men and devils; it is proof enough to me that the God of Heaven is both the author, and owner, and giver of it.

Shortly, then, let my soul be built upon this rocky foundation of the Prophets and Apostles: let thy storms rise, and thy floods come, and thy winds blow, and beat upon it; it shall mock at thy fury, and shall stand firm against all the rage of hell; Matt. vii 24, 25.

IIId. TEMPTATION:

"*Art thou so sottish to suffer thy understanding to be captivated to, I know not what, divine authority; proposing unto thee things contrary to sense and reason, and therefore absurd and impossible? Be thou no other than thyself, a man; and follow the light and guidance of that, which makes thee so, right reason: and, whatsoever disagrees from that, turn it off as no part of thy belief, to those superstitious bigots, which are willing to lose their reason in their faith, and to bury their brains in their heart:*" Repelled.

WICKED Tempter, thou wishest me to my loss. Woe were to me, if I were but a man; and if I had no better guide to follow, than that which thou callest Reason.

It is from nature, that I am a man: it is from grace, that I am a man regenerate. Nature holds forth to me as a man, the dim and weak rush-candle-light of carnal reason: the grace of regeneration shows me the bright torch-light, yea, the sun of divine illumination.

Thou biddest me, as a man, to follow the light of reason: God bids me, as a regenerate man, to follow the light of faith: whether should I believe? whether should I listen to?

It is true, that reason is the great gift of my Creator; and that, which was intended to distinguish us from brute creatures: but where is it, in the original purity, to be found under heaven? Surely, it can now appear to us in no other shape, than either as corrupted by thy depravation, or by God's renovating grace restored. As it is marred by thee, even natural truths are too high for it: as it is renewed by God, it can apprehend and embrace supernatural verities.

It is regenerate reason, that I shall ever follow; and that will teach me to subscribe to all those truths, which the unerring Spirit of the Holy God hath revealed in his Sacred Word, however contrary to the ratiocination of flesh and blood. Only this is the right reason, which is illuminated by God's Spirit, and willingly subjected to faith; which represents to me those things, which thou suggestest to me for unreasonable and impossible, as not feasible only, but most certain. That, in one Deity, there are three most glorious persons, distinguished in their subsistences, not divided in their substance; that, in one person of Christ the Mediator, there are two natures, divine and human, not converted into each other, not confounded each with other; that the Creator of all things should become a creature; that a creature should be the mother of him, that is her God: however they be points, which carnal reason cannot put over; yet they are such, as reason illuminate and regenerate can both easily and most comfortably digest. *Great is the mystery of godliness; God manifested in the flesh;* 1 Tim.

iii. 16. What mystery were there in godliness, if the deepest secrets of religion did lie open to the common apprehension of nature?

My Saviour, who is Truth itself, hath told me, that *no man knoweth the Father; but the Son; and he, to whom the Son will reveal him;* Matt. xi. 27: and, with the same breath, gives thanks to his Heavenly Father, that he hath *hid these things from the wise and prudent*, who were most likely, if reason might be the meet judge of spiritual matters, to attain the perfect knowledge of them; and hath *revealed them to babes;* v. 25.

It is therefore God's revelation, not the ratiocination of man, that must give us light into these divine mysteries. Were it a matter of human disquisition, why did not those sages of nature, the learned philosophers of former times, reach unto it? But now a more learned man than they, the great Doctor of the Gentiles, tells us, that *the Gospel and preaching of Jesus Christ yields forth the revelation of the mysteries, which were kept secret since the world began; but are now manifested by the Scriptures of the Prophets; and, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith;* Rom. xvi. 25, 26. Lo, he saith not to the obedience of reason; but of faith: and that faith doth more transcend reason, than reason doth sense.

Thou urgest me, therefore, to be a man: I profess myself to be a Christian man. It is reason, that makes me a man: it is faith, that makes me a Christian.

The wise and bountiful God hath vouchsafed to hold forth four several lights to men; all which move in four several orbs, one above another; the light of sense, the light of reason, the light of faith, the light of ecstatical or divine vision. And all of these are taken up with their own proper objects: sense is busied about these outward and material things: reason is confined to things intelligible: faith is employed in matters spiritual and supernatural: divine vision, in objects celestial, and infinitely glorious.

None of these can exceed their bounds; and extend to a sphere above their own. What can the brute creature, which is led by mere sense, do or apprehend in matters of understanding and discourse? What can mere man, who is led by reason, discern in spiritual and supernatural things? What can the Christian, who is led by faith, which is *the evidence of things not seen*, attain unto in the clear vision of God and heavenly glory?

That God, who is a God of Order, hath determined due limits to all our powers and faculties: thou, that art a Spirit of Confusion, goest about to disturb and disorder all those just ranks; labouring to jumble together those distinct orbs of reason and faith, and, by the light of reason, to extinguish the light of faith; and wouldst have us so to put on the man, as that we should put off the Christian: but I have learned in this case to deny thee; grounding myself upon that word, which is *mighty, through God, to the pulling down of strong holds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and*

bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; 2 Cor. x. 4, 5.

I will, therefore, follow my sense so far as that will lead me; and not suffer myself to be beaten off from so sure a guide. Where my sense leaves me, I will betake myself to the direction of reason; and, in all natural and moral things, shall be willingly led by the guidance thereof. But, when it comes to supernatural and divine truths; when I have the word of a God for my assurance, farewell reason, and welcome faith: as, when I shall have dispatched this weary pilgrimage, and from a traveller shall come to be a comprehensor, farewell faith, and welcome vision.

In the mean time, I shall labour, what I may, to understand all revealed truths; and, where I cannot apprehend, I shall adore: humbly submitting to that word of the great and holy God, *My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord: For, as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts*; Is. lv. 8, 9.

IVTH. TEMPTATION.

"*In how vain and causeless awe art thou held of dangers threatened to thy soul, and horrors of punishment after this life! whereas these are nothing but politic bugs, to affright simple and credulous men. Sin freely, Man; and fear nothing. Take full scope to thy pleasures. After this life, there is nothing: the soul dies together with the body, as in brute creatures: there is no further reckoning to be made:*" Repelled.

Deceitful Spirit! How thou goest about to persuade me to that, which thyself would be most loth should be true? For, if the soul of man expired with the body, what subject shouldst thou have of that tyranny and torment, which thou so much affectest? How willingly dost thou seem to fight against thyself, that thou mightest overcome me!

But this dart of thine is too blunt to pierce even a rational breast. Why dost thou not go about to persuade me, that I am not a man, but a brute creature? Such I should be, if my soul were no other than theirs: for, as for bodily shape, there are of them not much unlike me. Why dost thou not persuade me, that those brute creatures are men? if their souls were as ours, what were the difference? Canst thou hope I can so abdicate myself, as to put myself into the rank of beasts? Canst thou think so to prevail with thy suggestions, as to make reason itself turn irrational?

How palpably dost thou confound thyself, in this very act of temptation! for, if I had not a soul beyond the condition of brute creatures, how am I capable of sinning? Why dost thou persuade

me to that, whereof my nature, if but brutish, can have no capacity? Dost thou labour to prevail with thy temptations upon beasts? Dost thou importune their yieldance to sinful motions? If they had such a soul as mine, why should they not sin, as well as I? why should they not be equally guilty? Contrarily, are those brute things capable of doing those works, which may be pleasing unto God; the performance whereof thou so much enviest unto me? Can they desire and endeavour to be holy? are they capable of making conscience of their ways?

Know then, O thou Wicked Spirit, that I know myself animated with another and more noble spirit, than these other material creatures; and that I am sufficiently conscious of my own powers: that I have an inmate in my bosom, of a divine original; which, though it takes part with the body while it is included in this case of clay; yet can and will, when it is freed from this earth, subsist alone, and be eternally happy in the present and perpetual vision of the God that made and redeemed it; and, in the mean time, exerciseth such faculties, as well shew whence it is derived, and far transcend the possibility of all bodily temperament. Can it not compare one thing with another? Can it not deduce one sequel from another? Can it not attain to the knowledge of the secrets of nature, of the perfection of arts? Can it not reach to the scanning of human plots, and the apprehension of divine mysteries? Yea, can it not judge of spirits? How should it do all this, if it were not a spirit?

How evidently then doth the present estate of my soul convince thee of the future! All operations proceed from the forms of things; and every thing works as it is. Canst thou now deny that my soul, while it is within me, can and doth produce such actions, as have no derivation from the body, no dependance on the body? for, however, in matter of sensation, it sees by the eyes, and hears by the ears, and imagines by those phantasms that are represented unto it; yet, when it comes to the higher works of intellectual elevations, how doth it leave the body below it! raising to itself such notions, as wherein the body can challenge no interest: how can it now denude and abstract the thing conceived from all consideration of quantity, quality, place; and so work upon its own object, as becomes an active spirit! Thou canst not be so impudent, as to say the body doth these things by the soul; or that the soul doth them by the aid and concurrence of the body: and, if the soul doth them alone while it is thus clogged, how much more operative shall it be when it is alone, separated from this earthen lump! And, if the very voice of nature did not so sufficiently confute thee, that even thine own most eminent heathens have herein taken part against thee, living and dying strong assertors of the soul's immortality; how fully might thine accursed mouth be stopped, by the most sure words of divine truth!

Yea, wert thou disposed to play at some smaller game; and, by thy damnable clients to plead, not so much for the utter extinction as for the dominion of the soul, those Oracles of God have enough

to charm thee and them; and can, with one blow, cut the throat of both those blasphemies.

That penitent thief, whose soul thou madest full account of, when he was led to his execution, which yet my dying Saviour snatched out of thy hands, could hear comfortably from those blessed lips, *This day thou shalt be with me in paradise;* Luke xxiii. 43. Shall we think this malefactor in any other, in any better condition, than the rest of God's Saints? Doth not the Chosen Vessel tell us, that, upon the dissolution of *our earthly house of this tabernacle, we have a building of God, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens?* 2 Cor. v. 1. Presently, therefore, after our flitting hence, we have a being, and that glorious: who can think of a being in heaven, without a full sense of joy? Doth not our Saviour tell us, that the soul of poor Lazarus was immediately carried by angels into Abraham's bosom? Luke xvi. 22. The damned glutton knew so well that he was not laid there to sleep, that he sues to have him sent on the message of his refrigeration. Did not the Beloved Disciple, when he was in Patmos, upon the opening of the fifth seal, see *under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held?* Did he not hear them cry, *How long, Lord, holy and true?* Rev. vi. 9, 10. What! shall we think they cried in their sleep? Did he not see and hear the hundred-forty-four thousand Saints before the throne, harping and singing a new song to the praise of their God? Rev. xiv. 1, 3. Canst thou persuade us they made this heavenly music in their sleep? Doth he not tell us most plainly, from the mouth of one of the heavenly elders, that those, which stood before the throne and the Lamb, clothed with white robes and palms in their hands, were they that *came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb: Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple; and he, that sitteth on the throne, shall dwell among them: They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat: For the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes?* Rev. vii. 14—17. This service both day and night, and this leading forth, can suppose nothing less than a perpetual waking. Neither is this the happy condition of holy Martyrs and Confessors only, but is common to all the Saints of God in whatever profession: *Blessed are the dead, which die in the Lord;* Rev. xiv. 13. How should the dead be blessed, if they did not live to know themselves blessed? what blessedness can be incident into those, that either are not at all, or are senseless? They rest; but sleep not: they rest from their labours, not from the improvement of their glorified faculties: their works follow them; yea, and overtake them inheaven: to what purpose should their works follow them, if they lived not to enjoy the comfort of their works?

This is the estate of all good souls, in despite of all thine infernal powers. And what becomes of the wicked ones, thou too well

knowest. Dissemble thou, how thou wilt, those torments; and hide the sight of that pit of horror from the eyes of thy sinful followers: he, that *hath the keys of hell and of death*, (Rev. i. 18.) hath given us intimation enough: *Fear not them, which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him, who is able to destroy both body and soul in hell*; Matt. x. 28. Neither is he more able out of his omnipotence, than willing out of his justice, to execute this righteous vengeance on the impenitent and unbelievers: *Tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man, that doeth evil*; Rom. ii. 9.

In vain, therefore, dost thou seek to delude me with these pretences of indemnity and annihilation; since it cannot but stand with the mercy and justice of the Almighty, to dispose of every soul according to what they have been, and what they have done: *To them, who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality; eternal life: but, unto them, that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness; indignation and wrath*; Rom. ii. 7, 8. Shortly, after all thy devilish suggestions, on the one part, "The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and there shall no torment touch them;" Wisd. ii. 1: on the other, *In flaming fire shall vengeance be taken on them, that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished, with everlasting destruction, from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power*; 2 Thes. i. 8, 9.

VTH. TEMPTATION:

"*Put the case that the soul after the departure from the body may live; but art thou so foolishly credulous, as to believe that thy body, after it is mouldered into dust and resolved into all its elements, having passed through all the degrees of putrefaction and annihilation, shall at last return to itself again, and recover the former shape and substance? Dost thou not apprehend the impossibility of this so absurd assertion?*" Repelled.

No, Tempter, it is true and holy faith, which thou reproachest for fond credulity. Had I to do with no greater power than thine, or than any angel's in heaven, that is, merely finite; I might well be censured for too light belief, in giving my assent to so difficult a truth: but, now that I have to do with Omnipotence, it is no less than blasphemy in thee to talk of impossibility.

Do not thy very Mahometan vassals tell thee, that the same power, which made man, can as well restore him? and canst thou be other than apposed with the question of that Jew, who asked, whether it were more possible to make a man's body of water or of earth? All things are alike easy to an infinite power. It is true, the resuscitation of the body from its dust is a supernatural work; yet such, as whereof God hath been pleased to give us many images and presi-

gurations, even in nature itself. In the face of the earth, do we not see the image of death, in winter season; and, in the spring, of a cheerful resurrection? Is not the life of all herbs, flowers, trees buried in the earth, during that whole dead season; and doth it not rise up again, with the approaching sun, into stems and branches; and send forth blossoms, leaves, fruits, in all beautiful variety? What need we any other than the Apostle's instance? *Thou fool, that, which thou sowest, is not quickened, except it die: And that, which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain; it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: But God giveth it a body, as it pleaseth him; and to every seed his own body;* 1 Cor. xv. 36, 37, 38. Lo, it must be rottenness and corruption, that must make way for a flourishing increase. If I should come to a man, that is ignorant of these fruitful productions of the earth; and, shewing him a little naked grain, should tell him, "This, which thou seest, shall rot in the ground; and, after that, shall rise up a yard high into divers stalks, and every stalk shall bear an ear, and every ear shall yield twenty or thirty such grains as itself is:" or, shewing him an acorn, should say, "This shall be buried in the earth; and, after that, shall rise up twenty or thirty foot high, and shall spread so far as to give comfortable shade to a hundred persons:" surely, I should not win belief from him; yet our experience daily makes good these ordinary proofs of the wonderful providence of the Almighty. Or, should I shew a man, that is unacquainted with these great marvels of nature, the small seed of the silk-worm, lying scattered upon a paper, and seemingly dead all winter long; and should tell him, "These little atoms, so soon as the mulberry-tree puts forth will yield a worm, which shall work itself into so rich a house, as the great princes of the earth shall be glad to shelter themselves with; and, after that, shall turn to a large fly, and in that shape shall live to generate, and then speedily die:" I should seem to tell incredible things; yet this is so familiar to the experienced, that they cease to wonder at it. If, from these vegetables, we should cast our eyes upon some sensitive creatures, do we not see snails, and flies, and some birds, lie as senseless and lifeless all the winter time; and yet, when the spring comes, they recover their wonted vivacity?

Besides these resemblances, have we not many clear instances and examples of our resurrection? Did not the touch of Elisha's bones raise up the partner of his grave? 2 Kings xiii. 21. Was not Lazarus called up out of his sepulchre, after four days' possession, and many noisome degrees of rottenness? John xi. 39, 44. Were not the graves opened of many bodies of the Saints which slept? Did not they arise and come out of their graves, after my Saviour's Resurrection, and go into the holy city, and appear unto many? Matt. xxvii. 52, 53.

Besides examples, have we not an all-sufficient pledge of our certain rising again, in the victorious Resurrection of the Lord of Life? Is not he our Head? are not we his members? Is not he the first-fruits of them that slept? 1 Cor. xv. 20. Did he not conquer death

for us? 1 Cor. xv. 57. Can the Head be alive and glorious, while the limbs do utterly perish in a final corruption? Certainly then, *If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also, which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him*; 1 Thess. iv. 14.

And, if there were no more, that one argument, wherewith my Saviour of old confounded thy Sadducees, lives still to confound thee: *God is the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; but God is not the God of the dead, but of the living*; Matt. xxii. 32. The soul alone is not Abraham: whole Abraham lives not, if the body were not to be joined to that soul.

Neither is it only certain, that the resurrection will be; but also necessary, that it must be: neither can the contrary consist with the infinite Wisdom, Goodness, Justice, Mercy of the Almighty.

For, first, how can it stand with the infinite Goodness of the All-wise God, that the creature, which he esteems dearest and loves best, should be the most miserable of all other? Man is, doubtless, the best piece of his earthly workmanship: holy men are the best of men: were there no resurrection, surely no creature under heaven were so miserable as the holiest man. The basest of brute creatures find a kind of contentment in their being; and, were it not for the tyranny of man, would live and die at ease: and others of them, in what jollity and pleasure do they wear out their time! As for wicked men, who let the reins loose to their licentious appetite, how do they place their heaven here below; and glory in this, that they are yet somewhere happy! But for the mortified Christian, were it not for the comfort and amends of a resurrection, who can express the misery of his condition? He beats down his body, in the willing exercises of sharp austerity; and, as he would use some sturdy slave, keeps it under; holding short the appetite, oftentimes, even from lawful desires: so as his whole life is little other, than a perpetual penance. And, as for his measure from others, how open doth he lie to the indignities, oppressions, persecutions of men! how is he trampled upon by scornful malignity! how is he reputed the off-scouring of the world! how is he made a gazing-stock of reproach to the world, to angels, and to men! Did there not, therefore, abide for them the recompence of a better estate in another world, the earth could afford no match to them in perfect wretchedness; 1 Cor. xv. 19: which how far it abhorreth from that goodness, which made all the world for his elect, and so loves them that he gaves his own Son for their redemption, let any enemy, besides thine accursed self, judge.

How can it stand with the infinite Justice of God, who dispenseth due rewards to good and evil, to retribute them by halves? *The wages of sin is death: the gift of God is eternal life*: both these are given to the man; not to the soul. The body is copartner in the sin: it must, therefore, share in the torment: it must, therefore, be raised, that it may be punished. Eternity of joy or pain is awarded to the just, or to the sinner: how can the body be capable of either, if it should finally perish in the dust?

How can it stand with the infinite Mercy of God, who hath given

his Son entirely for the ransom of the whole man, and by him salvation to every believer, that he should shrink in his gracious performances: making good only one part of his eternal word to the spiritual half, leaving the bodily part utterly forlorn to an absolute corruption?

Know then, O thou Wicked One, that, when all the rabble of thine Athenian scoffers, and atheous Sadducees, and carnal Epicureans, shall have mis-spent all their spleen, my faith shall triumph over all their sensual reason; and shall afford me sound comfort, against all the terrors of death, from the firm assurance of my resurrection; and shall confidently take up those precious words, which the Mirror of Patience wished to be written in a book, and graven with an iron pen in the rock for ever, *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though, after my skin, worms destroy this body; yet, in my flesh, shall I see God;* Job xix. 23—26: and my soul shall set up her rest, in that triumphant conclusion of the blessed Apostle; *This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality: So, when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin: the strength of sin is the Law: but thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ;* 1 Cor. xv. 53—57.

VIII. TEMPTATION:

"*If the soul must live, and the body shall rise; yet what needest thou to affright thyself with the terrors of an universal judgment? Credulous soul! when shall these things be? Thou talkest of an awful Judge: but where is the promise of his coming? These sixteen hundred years hath he been looked for: and yet he is not come; and when will he?*" Repelled.

THY damned *scoffers* were betimes foreseen to move this question, even by that blessed Apostle, whose eyes saw his Saviour ascending up to his glory; 2 Pet. iii. 3: and who then heard the angel say, *Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come, in like manner, as ye have seen him go into heaven;* Acts i. 11. What dost thou, and they, but make good that sacred truth, which was delivered before so many hundred generations?

Dissemble how thou wilt, that there shall be a General Assize of the World, thou knowest; and tremblest to know. What other couldst thou mean, when thou askedst my Saviour that question of horror, *Art thou come to torment us before the time?* Matt. viii. 29. That time thou knowest to be *the day, in which God will judge the world in righteousness, by that man, whom he hath ordained; where-*

of he hath given assurance to all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead; Acts xvii. 31.

How clear attestation have the inspired Prophets of God given of old to this truth! The ancientest Prophet that ever was, Enoch, the seventh from Adam, in the time of the old world, foretels of this dreadful day: *Behold, the Lord cometh, with ten thousand of his Saints, to execute judgment upon all; and to convince all that are ungodly among them, of all their ungodly deeds, which they have ungodly committed; and of all their hard speeches, which ungodly sinners have spoken against him;* Jude 14, 15.

From the old world is this verity deduced to the new; and, through the succession of those holy Seers, derived to the blessed Apostles; and, from them, to the present generation.

Yea, the Sacred Mouth of Him, who shall come down, and sit as Judge in this awful tribunal, hath fully laid forth not the truth only, but the manner of this Universal Judicature: *The Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him: then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep;* Matt. xxv. 31, 32.

And if this most sure word of the Prophets, Apostles, yea and of the Eternal Son of God, be not enough conviction to thee; yet, to my soul, they are an abundant confirmation of this main point of my Christian Faith, That from heaven he "shall come to judge both the quick and the dead."

Indeed, thus it must be. How many condemned innocents have, in the bitterness of their souls, appealed from that unrighteous bar of men, to the Supreme Judge, that shall come! Those appeals are entered in heaven, and sued out: how can it stand with divine justice, that they should not have a day of hearing?

As for mean oppressors, there are good laws to meet with them; and there are higher than the highest, to give life of execution to those laws: but, if the greatest among men offend, if there were not a higher than they, what right would at last be done? those, that have the most power and will to do the greatest mischief, would escape the fairest. And, though there be a Privy Sessions in heaven upon every guilty soul, immediately upon the dissolution; yet the same justice, which will not admit public offences to be passed over with a private satisfaction, thinks fit to exhibit a public declaration of his righteous vengeance upon notorious sinners, before men and angels; so as those very bodies, which have been engaged in their wickedness, shall be, in the view of the whole world, sent down to take part of their torment: and, indeed, wherefore should those bodies be raised, if not with the intent of a further disposition, either to joy or pain? Contrarily, how can it consist with the praise of that infinite justice, that those poor saints of his, which have been vilified and condemned at every bar; persecuted, *afflicted, tormented;* Heb. xi. 37. and have passed through all manner of painful and ignominious deaths; should not, at the last, be gloriously righted, in the face of their cruel enemies? *Surely,* saith the Apostle, *it is*

a righteous thing with God, to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you: And to you, who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels; 2 Thess. i. 6, 7.

What is it, O thou Wicked Spirit, whereto thou art *reserved in chains of darkness?* is it not *the judgment of the great day?* Jude 6. What is it, whereto the manifestation of all hidden truths, and the accomplishment of all God's gracious promises, are referred? is it not the great day of the Lord? Shall the All-wise and Righteous Arbiter of the World decree and reverse? Hath he not, from eternity, determined and set this day, Wherein *we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or evil?* 2 Cor. v. 10.

That there is, therefore, such a day of the Lord, *In the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burnt up: wherein the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God,* 2 Pet. iii. 10. 1 Thess. iv. 16. is no less certain, than that there is a heaven from whence he shall descend.

All thy cavil is, concerning the time. Thou and thine are ready to say, with the evil servant in the Gospel, *My Master defers his coming.*

And was not this wicked suggestion of thine foretold, many hundred years ago, by the prime Apostle; and, by the same pen, answered? Hath he not told thee, that our computations of time are nothing to the Infinite? *That one day with the Lord is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day?* Hath he not told us, that this misconstrued slackness is in man's vain opinion, not in God's performance? 2 Pet. iii. 8, 9. He is slack to man, that comes not, when he is looked for: he is really slack, that comes not, when he hath appointed to come. Had the Lord broken the day, which he hath set in his everlasting counsel, thou mightest have some pretence to cavil at his delay; but, now that he only overstays the time of our mis-grounded expectation, he doth not slacken his pace, but correct our error.

It is true, that Christians began to look for their Saviour betimes: insomuch as the blessed Apostles were fain to persuade their eyes, not to make such haste; putting them in mind of those great occurrences of remarkable change, that must befal the Church of God, in a general Apostasy and the revelation of the great Antichrist, 2 Thes. ii. 3. before that great day of his appearance. And the prime Apostle sends them to the last days (which are ours) for those scoffers, which shall say, *Where is the promise of his coming?* 2 Pet. iii. 3, 4.

If they looked for him too soon, we cannot expect him too late. He, that is *Amen*, will be sure to be within his own time: when that comes, *he, that should come, will come, and not tarry.*

In the mean while, not only in the just observation of his own

eternal decree, but in much mercy, doth he prolong his return. Mercy to his elect, whose conversion he waits for with infinite patience: it is for their sake, that the world stands: the angel, that was sent to destroy Sodom, could tell Lot, that he could do nothing, till that righteous man were removed: no sooner was Lot entered into Zoar, than Sodom is on a flame; Gen. xix. 22, 24. Mercy, even to the wicked, that they may have ample leisure of repentance. Neither is it any small respect, that the wise and holy God hath to the exercise of the faith, and hope, and patience of his dear servants upon earth: faith, in his promises; hope, of his performances; and patience, under his delays; whereof there could be no use, in a speedy retribution.

In vain, therefore, dost thou, who fearest this Glorious Judge will come too soon, go about to persuade me, that he will not come at all. I believe and know, by all the foregoing signs of his appearance, that he is now even at the threshold. Lo, he cometh, he cometh, for the consummation of thy torment and my joy. I expect him, as my Saviour: tremble thou at him, as thy Judge, who shall fully repay to thee all those blasphemies, which thine accursed mouth hath dared to utter against him.

VIIth. TEMPTATION:

"*If there must be a Resurrection and a Judgment, yet God is not so rigid an exactor, as to call thee to account for every petty sin. Those Great Sessions are for heinous malefactors: God is too merciful to condemn thee for small offences: be not thou too rigorous to thyself, in denying to thyself the pleasure of some harmless sins:*" Repelled.

False Tempter, there is not the least of those harmless sins, which thou wilt not be ready to aggravate against me, one day, before the dreadful tribunal of that Infinite Justice. Those, that are now small, will be then heinous, and hardly capable of remission.

Thy suggestions are no meet measures of the degrees of sin.

It is true, that there are some sins more grievous than others. There are faults: there are crimes: there are flagitious wickednesses. If some offences be foul, others are horrible, and some others irremissible. But that Holy God, against whose only Majesty sin can be committed, hath taught me to call no sin small: the violation of that law, which is the rule of good, cannot but be evil; and betwixt good and evil, there can be no less than an infinite disproportion.

It is no small proof of thy cunning, that thou hast suborned some of thy religious panders to proclaim some sins venial; and such, as, in their very nature, merit pardon. Neither thou nor they shall be casuists for me; who have heard my God say, *Cursed is every one,*

that continueth not in all things, that are written in the book of the Law, to do them; Gal. iii. 10. Deut. xxvii. 26.

Sin must be greater or less, according to the value of the command against which it is committed. There is, as my Saviour hath rated it, *a least commandment;* Matt. v. 19: and there are more points than one, in that *least command:* now the Spirit of Truth hath told me, that *Whosoever shall keep the whole Law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all;* James ii. 10: and shall he, that is guilty of the breach of the whole Law, escape with such ease?

I am sure, a greater Saint, than I can ever hope to be, hath said, *If I sin, thou markest me; and wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity;* Job x. 14: and old Eli, as indulgent as he was to his wicked sons, could tell them, *If one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him; but, if a man sin against the Lord, who shall entreat for him?* 1 Sam. ii. 25.

"What need is there," thou sayest, "of any entreaty? God's mercy is such, that he will pardon thy sins unasked: neither will he ever stick at small faults."

Malignant Spirit, how fain wouldst thou have God's mercy and justice clash together! but thou shalt as soon wind thyself out of the power of that justice, and put thyself into the capacity of that mercy, as thou shalt set the least jar between that infinite justice and mercy.

It is true, it were wide with my soul, if there were any limits to that mercy. That mercy can do any thing, but be unjust. It can forgive a sinner; it cannot encourage him: forgive him, upon his penitence, when he hath sinned; not encourage him, in his resolution to sin: *If thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared;* Ps. cxxx. 3, 4.

I know, therefore, whither to have my recourse, when I have offended my God: even to that Throne of Grace, where there is *plenteous redemption;* free and full remission. I hear the heavenly voice of him, that saith, *I, even I, am he, that blotteth out thy transgressions, for my own sake; and will not remember thy sins;* Is. xliii. 25: but, I dare not offend, because his grace aboundeth. Justly doth the Psalmist make the use and effect of his mercy, to be our fear: we must fear him, for his mercies; and, for his judgments, love him. So far am I from giving myself leave to sin, because I have to do with a merciful God; as that his judgments have not so much power to drive me, as his mercies have to draw me from my dearest sins.

As, therefore, my greatest sins are not too big for his mercy to remit; so my least sins are great enough to deserve his eternal displeasure. He, that shall come to be Judge at those Great Assizes, hath told us, that even *of every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give an account;* Matt. xii. 36. What can be slighter than the wind of our words? and what words more harmless, than those, which have no evil quality in them, though no good? such are our idle words: yet even those may not pass without an account. And

if our thoughts be yet less than they; even those must so try us, as either to accuse or excuse us; and, if evil, may condemn us; Rom. ii. 15. Matt. xv. 19.

Think not, therefore, to draw me into sin, because it is little: *The wages of sin is death:* here is no stint of quantities. If sin be the work, death is the wages. Persuade me now, if thou canst, that there is a little death for a little sin: persuade me, that there is a lesser infiniteness, and a shorter eternity: till the great Judge of the World reverse his most just sentence, I shall look upon every sin as my death, and hate thee for the cause of both.

But, as thy suggestion shall never move me to take liberty to myself of yielding to the smallest sin; so the greatness of my most heinous sin shall not daunt me, while I rely upon an infinite mercy. Even my bloodiest sins are expiated by the blood of my Saviour. That, my All-sufficient Surety, hath cleared all my scores in heaven. In him I stand fully discharged of all my debts; and shall, after all thy wicked temptations, hold resolute; as not to commit the least sin, so not fear the greatest.

VIIIth. TEMPTATION:

"*What a vain imagination is this, wherewith thou pleasest thyself, that thy sins are discharged in another man's person; that another's righteousness should be thine; that thine offences should be satisfied by another's punishment! Tush, they abuse thee, that persuade thee God is angry with mankind, which he loves and favours; or that his anger is appeased by the bloody satisfaction of a Saviour; that thou standest acquitted in heaven by that, which another hath done and suffered. These are fancies, not fit to find place in the heads of wise men:*" Repelled.

NAY, rather, these are blasphemies, not fit to fall from any, but a malignant devil. What is this, but to flatter man, that thou mayest slander God?

Is not the anger of a just God deservedly kindled against man for sin? Do not *our iniquities separate between us and our God?* Do not *our sins hide his face from us, that he will not hear?* Is. lix. 2. Are we not *all by nature the children of wrath?* Eph. ii. 3. Doth not *the wrath of God come*, for sin, *upon the children of disobedience?* Eph. v. 6. Doth not every willing sinner, *after his hardness and impenitent heart, treasure up unto himself*, lest he should not have enough, *wrath against the day of wrath, and the revelation of the just judgment of God?* Rom. ii. 5.

Why do not thy Socinian clients go about to persuade us, as well, that God is not angry with thee; though he torment thee perpetually, and hold thee *in everlasting chains under darkness?* Jude 6. What proofs can we have of anger, but the effects of displeasure? was it not from hence, that man was driven out of Paradise? was

it not from hence, that both he, and we in him, were adjudged to death? as it is written, *By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all men have sinned;* Rom. v. 12. yea, not only to a temporal death, but. *By the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation;* Rom. v. 18.

Thou, who art the dreadful executioner, knowest too well who it is, that had *the power of death*, over those, who, *through the fear of death, were all their lives long subject unto bondage;* Heb. ii. 14, 15. Under this woeful captivity, did we lie; *sold under sin;* vassals to it, and death, and thee; Rom. vii. 14. vi. 16. till that *one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus*, was pleased to *give himself a ransom for all, that he might redeem us from all iniquity;* who, *by his own blood, entered in once into the holy place, making an eternal redemption for us;* 1 Tim. ii. 5. Tit. ii. 14. Heb. ix. 12.

Lo, it is not doctrine and example, it is no less than blood, the blood of the Son of God shed for our redemption, that renders him a perfect Mediator, and *cleanseth us from all sin;* Eph. i. 7. 1 John i. 7. *He hath loved us, and hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God, for a sweet-smelling savour;* Eph. v. 2. *He hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law; from the power of darkness: and hath reconciled us in the body of his flesh, through death, to present us holy, unblameable, and unreproveable in his sight;* Gal. iii. 13. Col. i. 13. Col. i. 22. He it is, that *bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sins should live unto righteousness;* 1 Pet. ii. 24.

So abundant and clear testimony hath God been pleased to give to the infinite merit and efficacy of the bloody satisfaction of his Son Jesus made for us, that, wert thou not as unmeasurably impudent as malicious, thou couldst not endeavour to outface so manifest a truth.

Think not to beat me off from this sure and saving hold, by suggesting the improbability of another's satisfaction and obedience becoming mine. What is more familiar than this? Our sins are *debts:* so my Saviour hath styled them; Matt. vi. 12. How common a thing is it, for debts to be set over to another's hand! how ordinary for a bond to be discharged by the surety? If the debt then be paid for me, and that payment accepted of the creditor as mine, how fully am I acquitted!

Indeed, thou dost no other than slander our title. The righteousness, whereby we stand just before our God, is not merely another's: it is, by application, ours: it is Christ's; and Christ is ours. He is our Head: we, as members, are united to him; and, by virtue of this blessed union, partake of his perfect obedience and satisfaction. It is true, were we strangers to a Saviour, his righteousness could have no relation to us; but, now that we are incorporated into him, by a lively faith, his graces, his merits are so ours, that all thy malice cannot sever them. I, even I who sinned in the First Adam, have satisfied in the Second. The First Adam's sin was mine: the Second Adam was *made sin* for me; 2 Cor. v. 21

I made myself sinful in the First Adam; and in myself: my *Christ is made to* me *of God righteousness and redemption*; 1 Cor. i. 30. The curse was my inheritance: *Christ hath redeemed me from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for* me, *that* I *might be made the righteousness of God in him*; Gal. iii. 13. 2 Cor. v. 21. It is thy deep envy, thus to grudge unto man the mercy of that redemption, which was not extended to thyself: but, in despite of all thy snarling and repining, we are safe. *Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ*; Rom. v. 1.

IXth. TEMPTATION:

"*How confidently thou buildest upon a promise; and, if thou have but a word for it, makest thyself sure of any blessing! whereas thou mayest know, that many of those promises, which thou accountest sacred and divine, have shrunk in the performance. How hath God promised deliverance to those, that trust in him! yet how many of his faithfullest servants have miscarried! What liberal promises hath he made of provision, for those, that wait upon him! yet how many of them have miserably perished in want!*" Repelled.

BLASPHEMOUS Spirit, that, which is thine own guise, thou art ever apt to impute unto the Holy One of Israel. It is, indeed, thy manner, to draw on thy clients with golden promises of life, wealth, honour; and to say, as once to my Saviour, *All these will I give thee;* when thou neither meanest, nor canst give any thing, but misery and torment.

As for my God, whom thou wickedly slanderest, his just title is, *Holy and True;* Rev. vi. 10: his promises are *Amen*, as himself; 2 Cor. i. 20. Rev. iii. 14. Thy Balaam could let fall so much truth, that *God is not a man, that he should lie; nor the son of man, that he should repent. Hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?* Num. xxiii. 19.

Cast thine eyes back upon his dealings with his Israel; a people unthankful enough: and deny, if thou canst, how punctual he was in all his proceedings with them. Hear old Joshua, now towards his parting, profess, *Behold, this day I am going the way of all flesh; and ye know, in your hearts and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things, which the Lord your God spake concerning you: all are come to pass unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof;* Josh. xxiii. 14. Hear the same truth attested, many ages after, by the wisest King: *Blessed be the Lord*, saith he, *that hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he promised: there hath not failed one word of all his good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses his servant;* 1 Kings viii. 56.

And, lest thou shouldst cavil, that perhaps God takes greater li-

berty to himself in matter of his promises under the Gospel, than he formerly did under the Law; let me challenge thy malice to instance in any one absolute promise, which God hath made since the beginning of the world unto this day, which he hath failed to perform.

It is not, I grant, uneasy to name divers conditionate engagements, both of favours and judgments, wherein God hath been pleased to vary from his former intimations: and such alteration doth full well consist with the infinite wisdom, mercy, and justice of the Almighty; for, where the condition required is not performed by man, how just is it with God, either to withhold a favour, or to inflict a judgment! or, where he sees that an outward blessing promised (such a disposition of the soul as it may meet withal) may turn to our prejudice, and to our spiritual loss, how is it other than mercy to withdraw it; and, instead thereof, to gratify us with a greater blessing undesired?

In all which, even our own reason is able to justify the Almighty: for can we think God should be so obliged to us, as to force favours upon us when we will needs render ourselves uncapable of them; or so tied up to the punctuality of a promise, as that he may not exchange it for a better?

The former was Eli's case, who received this message from the man of God, sent to him for that purpose: *The Lord God of Israel saith, I said indeed that thy house, and the house of thy father should walk before me for ever: but now the Lord saith, Be it far from me; for them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed;* 1 Sam. ii. 30. God meant the honour of the priesthood to the family of Eli: but what! was it in so absolute terms, that however they dishonoured God, yet God was bound to honour them? All these promises of outward favours do never other than suppose an answerable capacity in the receiver: like as the menaces of judgment, however they sound, do still intend the favourable exception of a timely prevention by a serious repentance.

And, though there be no express mention of such condition in the promises and threatenings of the Almighty; yet it is enough, that he hath once for all made known his holy intentions to this purpose by his Prophet: *At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it: If that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And, at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it: If it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them;* Jer. xviii. 7—10.

The message of Hezekiah's death and Nineveh's destruction was, in the letter, absolute; but, in the sense and intention, conditionate.

With such holy and just reservations, are all the promises and threats of the Almighty, in these temporal regards: while they alter therefore, he changeth not. But for his spiritual engagements,

that word of his shall stand everlastingly, *I will not suffer my faithfulness to fail: My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my mouth;* Ps. lxxxix. 33, 34.

Indeed, this is the temptation, wherewith thou hast formerly set some prime Saints of God, very hard.

How doth the holy Psalmist, hereupon, break out into a dangerous passion! *Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favourable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? doth his promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he shut up his tender mercies in displeasure?* Ps. lxxvii. 7—9. Lo, the man was even falling; yet happily recovers his feet: *And I said, This is mine infirmity;* v. 10: thine infirmity, sure enough, O Asaph, to make question of the veracity and unfailableness of the sure mercies and promises of the God of Truth. Well was it for thee, that thy God, not taking advantage of thy weakness, puts forth his gracious hand, and stays thee with the seasonable consideration *of the years of the right-hand of the Most High;* with the remembrance *of the works of the Lord, and of his wonders of old;* vv. 10. 11. These were enough to teach thee the omnipotent power, the never-failing mercy, of thy Maker and Redeemer.

In no other plight, through the impetuousness of this temptation, was the man after God's own heart; while he cried out, *I was greatly afflicted: I said, in my haste, all men are liars;* Ps. cxvi. 10, 11. The men, that he mis-doubted, were surely no other, than God's prophets, which had foretold him his future prosperity, and peaceable settlement in the throne: these, upon the cross occurrences he met with, is he ready to censure as liars; and, through their sides, what doth he but strike at him, that sent them? But the word was not spoke in more haste, than it was retracted: *I believed; therefore I spake;* v. 10: and the sense of mercy doth so overtake the sense of his sufferings, that now he takes more care what to retribute to God for his bounty, than he did before how to receive it; and pitches himself upon that firm ground of all comfort, *O Lord, truly I am thy servant; I am thy servant, and the son of thy handmaid: thou hast loosed my bonds:* v. 16. Here shall I stay my soul, against all thy suggestions of distrust, O thou malicious Enemy of Mankind; building myself upon that steady rock of Israel, whose word is, *I am Jehovah: I change not.*

Thou tellest me of deliverances promised, yet ending in utter miscarriages; of provisions vanished into want: why dost thou not tell me, that even good men die?

These promises of earthly favours to the godly declare to us the ordinary course, that God pleaseth to hold in the dispensation of his blessings; which he so ordereth, as that generally they are the lot of his faithful ones, for the encouragement and reward of their services: and, contrarily, his judgments befal his enemies, in part of payment. But yet, the great God, who is a most free agent, holds fit to leave himself at such liberty, as that, sometimes, for his own most holy purposes, he may change the scene: which yet

he never doth, but to the advantage of his own; so as the oppressions and wrongs, which are done to them, turn favours.

The Hermit in the Story could thank the thief that robbed him of his provision, for that he helped him so much the sooner to his journey's end; and, indeed, if, being stripped of our earthly goods, we be stored with spiritual riches; if, while the outward man perisheth, the inward man be renewed in us; if, for a little bootless honour here, we be advanced to an immortal glory; if we have exchanged a short and miserable life, for a life eternally blessed; finally, if we lose earth, and win heaven; what cause have we to be other than thankful?

Whereto we have reason to add, that, in all these gracious promises of temporal mercies, there is ever to be understood the exception of expedient castigation, and the meet portage of the Cross; which were it not to be supplied, God's children should want one of the greatest proofs of his fatherly love towards them: which they can read even written in their own blood; and can bless God, in killing them for a present blessedness.

So as, after all thy malice, God's promises are holy, his performances certain, his judgments just, his servants happy.

XTH. TEMPTATION:

"*Thou art more nice than needs: Your preachers are too strait-laced in their opinions, and make the way to heaven narrower than God ever meant it. Tush, man, thou mayest be saved in any religion. Is it likely, that God will be so cruel, as to cast away all the world of men in the several varieties of their professions, and save only one poor handful of Reformed Christians? Away with these scruples: a general belief, and a good meaning, will serve to bring thee to heaven, without these busy disquisitions of the Articles of Faith:*" Repelled.

IT is not for good, that thou makest such liberal tenders to my soul. Thou well knowest, how ready man's nature is, to lay hold on any just liberty, that may be allowed him; and how repiningly it stoops to a restraint.

But this, which thou craftily suggestest to me, Wicked Spirit, is not liberty; it is licentiousness. Thou tellest me the way to heaven is as wide as the world; but the Spirit of Truth hath taught me, that *strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, that leadeth unto life; and few there be that find it;* Matt. vii. 13.

I know there is but one truth, and one life, and one way to that life; and I know who it was that said, *I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life.* He, who is one of these, is all. My Saviour, who is Life, the end of that way, is likewise the Way, that leads unto that end: neither is there any way to heaven, but he: all, that is besides him, is by-paths and error. And, if any teacher shall

enlarge or straiten this way to Christ, let him be accursed. And, if any teacher shall presume to chalk out any other way than Christ, let him be accursed.

Tell not me, therefore, of the multitudes of men, and varieties of religions, that there are in the world. If there were as many worlds as men, and every of those men in those worlds were severed in religion; yet, I tell thee, there is but one heaven, and but one gate to that heaven, and but one way to that gate; and that one gate, and way, is Christ; without whom, therefore, there can be no entrance.

It is thy blasphemy, to charge cruelty upon God, if he do not (that, whereof thou wouldst most complain, as the greatest loser) set heaven open on all sides to whatsoever comers. Even that God and Saviour, which possesseth and disposeth it, hath told us of a strait gate, and a narrow way, and few passengers. In vain dost thou move me to affect to be more charitable than my Redeemer. He best knows what he hath to do with that mankind, for whom he hath paid so dear a price.

Yet, to stop thy wicked mouth; that way, which, in comparison of the broad world, is narrow, in itself hath a comfortable latitude. Christ extendeth himself largely to a world of believers. This way lies open to all: no nation, no person under heaven, is excluded from walking in it: yea, all are invited, by the voice of the Gospel, to tread in it; and whosoever walks in it, with a right foot, is accepted to salvation.

How far it may please my Saviour to communicate himself to men, in an implicit way of belief; and what place those general and involved apprehensions of the Redeemer may find for mercy, at the hands of God; he only knows, that shall judge: this I am sure of, that, without this Saviour, there can be no salvation: *That, in every nation, he, that feareth God and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him;* Acts x. 35: *That he, that hath the Son, hath life; and he, that hath not the Son, hath not life;* 1 John v. 12.

As, therefore, we do justly abhor that wide scope of all religions, which thou suggestest; so we do willingly admit a large scope in one true religion: so large, as the author of it hath thought good to allow. For we have not to do with a God, that stands upon curiosities of belief; or that, upon pain of damnation, requires of every believer an exquisite perfection of judgment, concerning every capillary vein of theological truth: it is enough for him, if we be right for the main substance of the body. He doth not call rigorously for every stone in the battlements: it sufficeth, for the capacity of our salvation, if the foundation be held entire.

It is thy slander therefore, that we confine truth and blessedness to a corner of Reformed Christians: no; we seek and find it every where, where God hath a Church; and God's Church we know to be Universal. Let them be Abassines, Cophites, Armenians, Georgians, Jacobites, or whatever names either slander or distinction hath put upon them, if they hold the foundation firm, howsoever disgracefully built upon with *wood, hay, stubble;* we hold them

Christ's, we hold them ours; 1 Cor. iii. 12. Hence it is, that the New Jerusalem is, for her beauty and uniformity, set forth with twelve precious gates; Rev. xxi. 12: though, for use and substance, one: for that, from all coasts of heaven, there is free access to the Church of Christ; and, in him, to life and glory.

He, who is the Truth and the Life, hath said, *This is eternal life, to know thee, and him whom thou hast sent;* John xvii. 3. This knowledge, which is our way to life, is not alike attained of all: some have greater light and deeper insight into it, than others. That mercy, which accepts of the least degree of the true apprehension of Christ, hath not promised to dispense with the wilful neglect of those, who might know him more clearly, more exactly. Let those careless souls, therefore, which stand indifferent betwixt life and death, upon thy persuasion, content themselves with good meanings and generalities of belief: but, for me, I shall labour to furnish myself with all requisite truths; and, above all, shall aspire towards *the excellency of the knowledge of my Lord Jesus Christ; that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings;* Phil. iii. 8, 10.

TEMPTATIONS REPELLED.

THE SECOND DECADE.

TEMPTATIONS OF DISCOURAGEMENT.

1ST. TEMPTATION:

"*Were it for some few sins of ignorance or infirmity, thou mightest hope to find place for mercy: but thy sins are, as, for multitude, innumerable; so, for quality, heinous, presumptuous, unpardonable: with what face canst thou look up to heaven, and expect remission from a Just God?*" Repelled.

Even with the face of an humble penitent, justly confounded in himself, in the sense of his own vileness; but awfully confident, in a promised mercy.

Malicious Tempter, how like thou art to thyself! When thou wouldst draw me on to my sins; then, how small, slight, harmless, plausible they were! now thou hast fetched me in, to the guilt of those foul offences, they are no less than deadly and irremissible.

May I but keep within the verge of mercy, thou canst not more aggravate my wickedness against me, than I do against myself: thou canst not be more ready to accuse, than I to judge and condemn myself. Oh me, the wretchedest of all creatures! How do I hate myself for mine abominable sins, done with so high a hand, against such a Majesty, after such light of knowledge, such enforcements of warning, such endearments of mercy, such reluctations of spirit, such checks of conscience! what less than hell have I deserved from that Infinite Justice? Thou canst not write more bitter things against me, than I can plead against my own soul.

But, when thou hast cast up all thy venom, and when I have passed the heaviest sentence against myself, I, who am in myself utterly lost and forfeited to eternal death, in despite of the gates of hell shall live; and am safe, in my Almighty and Ever-Blessed Saviour, who hath conquered death and hell for me.

Set thou me against myself; I shall set my Saviour against thee. Urge thou my debts; I show his full acquittance. Sue thou my bonds; I shall exhibit them cancelled, and nailed to his Cross. Press thou my horrible crimes; I plead a pardon sealed in heaven. Thou tellest me of the multitude and heinousness of my sins: I tell

thee of an infinite mercy: and what are numbers and magnitudes to the Infinite? To an illimited power, what difference is there betwixt a mountain and an ant-heap, betwixt one and a million? were my sins a thousand times more and worse than they are, there is worth abundantly enough in every drop of that precious blood which was shed for my redemption, to expiate them.

Know, O Tempter, that I have to do with a mercy which can dye my scarlet sins, white as snow; and make my crimson, as wool; Is. i. 18: whose grace it so boundless, that if thou thyself hadst, upon thy fall, been capable of repentance, thou hadst not everlastingly perished: *The Lord is gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger, and of great mercy: The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works;* Ps. cxlv. 8, 9. And, if there be a sin of man unpardonable, it is not for the insufficiency of grace to forgive it; but for the incapacity of the subject, that should receive remission.

Thou feelest, to thy pain and loss, wherefore it was, that the Eternal Son of God, *Jesus Christ, came into the world;* even *to save sinners!* 1 Tim. i. 15: and, if my own heart shall conspire with thee to accuse me as the chief of those sinners, my repentance gives me so much the more claim and interest in his blessed redemption. Let me be the most laden with the chains of my captivity, so I may have the greatest share in that all-sufficient ransom.

And if thou, who art the true fiery serpent in this miserable wilderness, hast by sin stung my soul to death; let me, as I do, with penitent and faithful eyes, but look up to that Brazen Serpent, which is lift up far above all heavens, thy poison cannot kill, cannot hurt me.

It is the word of eternal truth, which cannot fail us, *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness;* 1 John i. 9. Lo here, not mercy only, but justice on my side. The Spirit of God saith not only, if we confess our sins, he is *merciful* to forgive our sins; as he elsewhere speaks, by the pen of Solomon; Prov xxviii. 13: but more; he is *faithful* and *just* to forgive our sins. Our weakness, and ignorance, is wont to fly from the justice of our God, unto his mercy: what can we fear, when his very justice yields remission? That justice relates to his gracious promise of pardon to the penitent: while I do truly repent therefore, his very justice necessarily infers mercy, and that mercy forgiveness. Think not, therefore, O thou Malicious Spirit, to affright me with the mention of Divine Justice. Woe were me, if God were not as just, as merciful; yea if he were not therefore merciful, because he is just: merciful, in giving me repentance; just, in vouchsafing me the promised mercy and forgiveness, upon the repentance which he hath given me.

After all thy heinous exaggerations of my guilt, it is not the quality of the sin, but the disposition of the sinner, that damns the soul. If we compare the offensive acts of a David and a Saul, it is not easy to judge whether were more foul. Thou, which stirredst them up both to those odious sins, madest account of an equal ad-

vantage against both: but thine aim failed thee: the humble and true penitence of the one saved him out of thy hands: the obduredness and false-heartedness of the other gave him up, as a prey to thy malice.

It is enough for me, that though I had not the grace to avoid my sins, yet I have the grace to hate and bewail them. That Good Spirit, which thought not good to restrain me from sinning, hath been graciously pleased to humble me for sinning.

Yea, such is the infinite goodness of my God to my poor soul, that those sins, which thou hast drawn me into, with an intent of my utmost prejudice and damnation, are happily turned, through his grace, unto my greatest advantage: for, had it not been for these my sinful miscarriages, had I ever attained to so clear a sight of my own frailty and wretchedness? so deep a contrition of soul? so real experience of temptation? so hearty a detestation of sin? such tenderness of heart? such awe of offending? so fervent zeal of obedience? so sweet a sense of mercy? so thankful a recognition of deliverance?

What hast thou now gained, O thou Wicked Spirit, by thy prevalent temptations? What trophies hast thou cause to erect for thy victory and my foil? Couldst thou have won me to a trade of sinning, to a resolution in evil, to a pleasure as in the commission so in the memory of my sin, to a glorying in wickedness, and then mightst have taken the advantage of snatching me away in a state of unrepentance, thou mightst have had just cause to triumph in thy prey; but now, that it hath pleased my God to shew me so much mercy, as to check me in my evil way, to work in me an abhorring of my sin and of myself for it, and to pull me out of thy clutches by a true and seasonable repentance, thou hast lost a soul, and I have found a Saviour. Thou mayest upbraid me with the foulness of my sins; I shall bless God for their improvement.

IID. TEMPTATION:

"*Alas, poor man, how willing thou art to make thyself believe that thou hast truly repented: whereas, this is nothing but some dump of melancholy; or some relenting of nature, after too much expense of spirits; or some irksome discontentment, after a satiety and weariness of pleasure; or some slavish shrinking in, upon the expectation of a lash: true penitence is a spiritual business; an effect of that grace, which was never incident into thy bosom:*"
Repelled.

MALICIOUS Tempter, it is my no small happiness, that thou art not admitted to keep the key of my heart; or to look into my breast, to see what is in my bosom: and therefore thou canst not, out of knowledge, pass any censure of my inward dispositions; only wilt be sure to suggest the worst; which the falser it is, the better doth

it become the Father of Lies. But that Good Spirit, which hath wrought true repentance in my heart, witnesseth, together with my heart, the truth of my repentance.

Canst thou hope to persuade me, that I do belie or mis-know my own grief? Do not I feel this heart of mine bleed with a true inward remorse for my sins? Have I not poured out many hearty sighs and tears for mine offences? Do I not ever look back upon them, with a vehement loathing and detestation? Have I not, with much anguish of soul, confessed them before the face of that God, whom I have provoked?

Think not now to choke me with a Cain, or Saul, or Judas, which did more, and repented not; and to fasten upon me a *worldly sorrow, that worketh death:* no; Wicked One, after all thy depravations, this grief of mine looks with a far other face than theirs; and is no other, than a *godly sorrow, working repentance to salvation, not to be repented of;* 2 Cor. vii. 10. Theirs was out of the horror of punishment; mine, out of the sense of displeasure: theirs, for the doom and execution of a severe Judge; mine, for the frowns of an offended Father: theirs, attended with a woeful despair; mine, with a weeping confidence: theirs, a preface to Hell; mine, an introduction to Salvation.

And, since thou wilt needs disparage, and mis-call this godly disposition of mine, lo, I challenge this envy of thine to call it to the test; and to examine it thoroughly, whether it agree not with those unfailing rules of the symptoms and effects of the sorrow, which is according to God; 2 Cor. vii. 11:—Hath not here been a true *carefulness;* as to be freed and acquitted from the present guilt of my sin, so to keep my soul unspotted for the future; both to work my peace with my God, and to continue it? Hath not my heart earnestly laboured to *clear* itself before God; not with shuffling excuses and flattering mitigations, but by humble and sincere confessions of my own vileness? Hath not my breast swelled up, with an angry *indignation*, at my sinful miscarriages? have I not seriously rated myself, for giving way to thy wicked temptations? Have I not *trembled*, not only at the apprehension of my own danger by sin, but at the very suggestion of the like offence? have I not been kept in awe with the jealous fears of my miserable frailties, lest I should be again ensnared in thy mischievous gins? Have I not felt in myself a *fervent desire* above all things to stand right in the recovered favour of my God; and to be strengthened in the inner man with a further increase of grace, for the preventing of future sins, and giving more glory to my God and Saviour? Hath not my heart within me burned with so much more *zeal* to the honour and service of that Majesty, which I have offended, as I have more dishonoured him by my offence? hath it not been inflamed with just displeasure at myself, and all the instruments and means of my misleading? Lastly, have I not *fallen foul upon myself* for so easy a seduction? have I not chastized myself with sharp reproofs? have I not held my appetite short; and, upon these very grounds, punished it with a denial of lawful contentments? have I not thereupon

tasked myself with the harder duties of obedience? and do I not now resolve, and carefully endeavour, to walk conscionably in all the ways of God?

Malign, therefore, how thou wilt, my repentance stands firm against all thy detractions; and is not more impugned by thee on earth, than it is accepted in heaven.

IIId. TEMPTATION:

"*Thou hast small reason to bear thyself upon thy repentance: it is too slight; seconded with too many relapses; too late to yield any true comfort to thy soul:*"—Repelled.

Nor thus can I be discouraged by thee, Malicious Spirit.

The mercy of my God hath not set any stint to the allowed measure of repentance. Where hath he ever said, "Thus far shall thy penitence come; else it shall not be accepted?" it is truth, that he calls for, not measure. That happy thief, whom my dying Saviour rescued out of thy hands, gave no other proof of his repentance, but, *We are justly here, and receive the due reward of our deeds*; Luke xxiii. 41: yet was admitted to attend his Redeemer, from his Cross to his Paradise. Neither do we hear any words from penitent David after his foul crimes, but *I have sinned.* Not that any true penitent can be afraid of too much compunction of heart, and is ready to dry up his tears too soon; rather pleasing himself with the continuance and pain of his own smart: but that our Indulgent Father, who takes no pleasure in our misery, is apt to wipe away the tears from our eyes; contenting himself only with the sincereness, not the extremity of our contrition. Thy malice is altogether for extremes; either a wild security, or an utter desperation: that Holy and Merciful Spirit, who is a professed lover of mankind, is ever for the mean; so hating our carelessness, that he will not suffer us to want the exercises of a due humiliation; so abhorring despair, that he abides not to have us driven to the brink of that fearful precipice. As for my repentance therefore, it is enough for me, that it is sound and serious for the substance; yet, withal, thanks be to that Good Spirit that wrought it, it is graciously approvable even for the measure: I have heartily mourned for my sins, though I pined not away with sorrow: I have broken my sleep for them, though I have not watered my couch with my tears; and, next to thyself, I have hated them most: I have beaten my breast, though I have not rent my heart: and what would I not have done or given, that I had not sinned? Tell not me, that some worldly crosses have gone nearer to my heart than my sins, and that I have spent more tears upon the loss of a son than the displeasure of my Heavenly Father: the Father of Mercies will not measure our repentance by these crooked lines of thine: he knows the flesh and blood we are made of: and therefore expects not we should have

so quick a sense of our spiritual, as of our bodily affliction: it contents him, that we set a valuation of his favour above all earthly things, and esteem his offence the greatest of all evils that can befal us: and of this judgment and affection, it is not in thy power to bereave my soul.

As for my relapses, I confess them with sorrow and shame. I know their danger; and, had I not to do with an infinite mercy, their deadliness. Yet, after all my confusion of face and thine enforcement of justice, my soul is safe: for, upon those perilous recidivations, my hearty repentance hath made my peace. The long-suffering God, whom I have offended, hath set no limits to his remission. After ten miraculous signs in Egypt, his Israel tempted him no less than ten times in the wilderness; Num. xiv. 22: yet his mercy forbore them; not rewarding their reiterated sin with deserved vengeance. Hath not that gracious Saviour of Mankind charged us to forgive our offending brother, no less than *seventy times seven times?* Matt. xviii. 22. and what proportion is there, between our mercy and his? Couldst thou charge me with encouraging myself to continue my sin upon this presumption of pardon, thou hadst cause to boast of the advantage: but, now that my remorse hath been sincere and my falls weak, my God will not withhold mercy from his penitent, that hath not only *confessed*, but *forsaken* his sin; Prov. xxviii. 13.

As for the late season of my repentance, I confess I have highly wronged and hazarded my soul, in the delay of so-often-required and so-often-purposed a work; and given thee fair advantages against myself, by so dangerous a neglect: but, blessed be my God, that he suffered not these advantages to be taken. I had been utterly lost, if thou hadst surprised me in my impenitence; but now I can look back upon my peril well passed, and defy thy malice. No time can be prejudicial to the King of Heaven: no season can be any bar, either to our conversion, or his merciful acceptance. It is true, that lateness gives shrewd suspicions of the truth of repentance; but where our repentance is true, it cannot come too late. Object this to some formal souls, that, having lavished out the whole course of their lives in wilful sensuality and profaneness, think to make an abundant amends for all, on their death-beds, with a fashionable *Lord, have mercy.* These, whom thou hast mocked and drawn on with a stupid security all their days, may well be upbraided by thee, with the irrecoverable delay of what they have not grace to seek; but that soul, which is truly touched with the sense of his sin, and in an humble contrition makes his address to God, and interposes Christ betwixt God and itself, is in vain scared with delay, and finds that his God makes no difference of hours. Do I not see the Prodigal in the Gospel, after he had run himself quite of breath and means; yet, at the last cast, returning, and accepted? Luke xv. 14, 15, &c. I do not hear his father austerely say, "Nay, unthrift, hadst thou come while thou hadst some bags left, I should have welcomed thy return, as an argument of some grace and love: but, now that thou hast spent all; and ne-

cessity, not affection drives thee home; keep off, and starve:" but the good old man runs, and meets him; and falls on his neck, and kisses him; and calls for the best robe, and the fatted calf. Thus, thus deals our Heavenly Father with us, wretched sinners: if, after all refuges vainly sought, and all gracious opportunities carelessly neglected, we shall yet have sincere recourse to his infinite mercy, the best things in heaven shall not be too good for us.

IVth. TEMPTATION:

"*Tush! what dost thou please thyself with these vain thoughts? If God cared for thee, couldst thou be thus miserable?*" Repelled.

Away, thou Lying Spirit: I am afflicted; but it is not in thy power to make me miserable.

And, did I yet smart much more, wouldst thou persuade me to measure the favour of my God by these outward events? Hath not the Spirit of Truth taught me, that, in these external matters, *All things come alike to all: there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked; to the good and clean, and to the unclean; to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not: as is the good, so is the sinner; and he that sweareth, as he that feareth an oath?* Eccl. ix. 2.

But, if there were any judgment to be passed upon these grounds, the advantage is mine: I smart, yea I bleed, under the hand of my Heavenly Father: *Whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth; and scourgeth every son, whom he receiveth;* Heb. xii. 6. Lo, there cannot be so much pain in the stripes, as there is comfort in the love of him, that lays them on. He were not my Father, if he whipt me not. Truth hath said it, *If ye be without chastisements, ye are bastards, and not sons;* Heb. xii. 8. He cannot but love me, while he is my Father; and let him fetch blood on me, so he love me. After all thy malice, let me be a bleeding son to such a Father, while thy base-born children enjoy their ease.

Impudent Tempter, how canst thou from my sufferings argue God's disfavour, when thou knowest that he, whom God loved best, suffered most? The Eternal Son of his Love, that could truly say, *I and the Father are one*, endured more from the hand of that his Heavenly Father, than all the whole world of mankind was capable to suffer: *Surely, he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows. He was wounded for our transgressions: he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisements of our peace were upon him. The Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all;* Is. liii. 4, 5, 6. What poor flea-bitings are these, that I am afflicted with; in respect of those torments, which the Son of God underwent for me! Thou, that sawest the bloody sweat of his agony, the cruel tortures of his crucifixion, the pangs of worse than death, the sense of his Father's wrath and our curse, dost thou move me, whom he hath

bought with so dear a price, to murmur, and recoil upon divine providence for a petty affliction?

Besides, this is the load, which my Blessed Saviour hath, with his own hand, laid upon my shoulders: *If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me;* Luke ix. 23. Matt. xvi. 24. Mark viii. 34. Lo, every cross is not Christ's: each man hath a cross of his own; and this cross he may not think to tread upon, but he must take up; and not once perhaps in his life, but daily; and, with that weight on his neck, he must follow the Lord of Life, not to his Tabor only, but to his Golgotha: and, thus following him on earth, he shall surely overtake him in heaven; *for, if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him;* 2 Tim. ii. 12.

It is still thy policy, O thou Envious Spirit, to fill mine eyes with the cross; and to represent nothing to my thoughts, but the horror and pain of suffering; that so thou mayest drive me to a languishing dejectedness of spirit, and despair of mercy: but my God hath raised and directed mine eyes to a better prospect, quite beyond thine; which is a crown of glory. I see that ready to be set upon my head, after my strife and victory, which were more than enough to make amends for a hell upon earth. In vain should I hope to obtain it, without a conflict: how should I overcome, if I strive not? These strugglings are the way to a conquest. After all these assaults, the foil shall be thine, and mine shall be the glory and triumph. The God of Truth hath said it, *Be faithful to the death, and I will give thee a crown of life;* Rev. ii. 10.

Thine advantage lies in the way; mine, in the end. The way of affliction is rugged, deep, stiff, dangerous: the end is fair and green, and strewed with flowers. *No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterwards, it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness, unto them, which are exercised thereby;* Heb. xii. 11.

What if I be in pain here, for a while? *The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us;* Rom. viii. 18. It is thy maliciousness, that would make the affliction of my body the bane of my soul; but, if the fault be not mine, that, which thou intendest for a poison, shall prove a cordial: *Let patience have her perfect work;* James i. 4: and I am happy in my sufferings: *For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding, and eternal weight of glory;* 2 Cor. iv. 17. Lo, it doth not only admit of glory, but works it for us: so as we are infinitely more beholden to our pain, than to our ease; and have reason, not only to be well apaid, but to *rejoice in tribulations; knowing, that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope; and hope maketh not ashamed;* Rom. v. 3—5. Tell me, if thou canst, which of those Saints, that are now shining bright in their heaven, hath got thither unafflicted? How many of those blessed ones have endured more, than my God will allow thee to inflict upon my weakness! some more, and some less sorrows; all some, yea many: so true is that

word of the Chosen Vessel, *that through much tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of God;* Acts xiv. 22.

By this then I see, that I am in the right way to that blessedness I am travelling towards. Did I find myself in the smooth, pleasant, and flowery path of carnal ease and contentment: I should have just reason to think myself quite out of that happy road: now, I know I am going directly towards my home, the abiding city which is above. So far, therefore, are my sufferings from arguing me miserable, that I could not be happy if I suffered not.

VTH. TEMPTATION:

"*Foolish man, how vainly dost thou flatter thyself, in calling that a chastisement, which God intends for a judgment; in mistaking that for a rod of fatherly correction, which God lays on as a scourge of just anger and punishment:*" Repelled.

IT is thy maliciousness, O thou Wicked Spirit, ever to misinterpret God's actions, and to slander the footsteps of the Almighty.

But, notwithstanding all thy mischievous suggestions, I can read mercy and favour in my affliction: neither shall it be in the power of thy temptation, to put me out of this just construction of my sufferings.

For, what! is it the measure of my smart, that should argue God's displeasure? How many of God's darlings on earth have endured more! What sayest thou to the man, with whom the Almighty did once challenge and foil thee, the great Pattern of Patience? was not his calamity as much beyond mine, as my graces are short of his? Dost thou not hear the man after God's own heart say, *Lord, remember David, and all his troubles?* Ps. cxxxii. 1. Dost thou not hear the Chosen Vessel, who was rapt up into the third heaven, complain, *We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed?* 2 Cor. iv. 8, 9. *Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes, save one: Thrice, was I beaten with rods: once, was I stoned: thrice, I suffered shipwreck: a night and a day, I have been in the deep. In journeying often; in perils of waters; in perils of robbers; in perils, by my own countrymen; in perils, by the heathen; &c. In weariness and painfulness; in watchings, often; in hunger and thirst; in fastings, often; in cold and nakedness?* 2 Cor. xi. 24—27. Yea, which was worse than all these, dost thou not hear him say, *There was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan, to buffet me?* 2 Cor. xii. 7. Dost thou not too well know, for thou wert the main actor in those woeful tragedies, what cruel torments the blessed martyrs of God, in all ages, have undergone for their holy profession? None upon earth ever found God's hand so heavy upon them: none upon earth were so dear to heaven.

The sharpness, therefore, of my pangs can be no proof of the

displeasure of my God. Yea, contrarily, this visitation of mine, whatever thou suggestest, is in much love and mercy. Had my God let me loose to my own ways, and suffered me to run on carelessly in a course of sinning without check or control, this had been a manifest argument of a high and heinous displeasure: God is grievously angry, when he punishes sinners with prosperity; for this shews them reserved to a fearful damnation: but whom he reclaims from evil by a severe correction, those he loves: there cannot be a greater favour, than those saving stripes: *When we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world;* 1 Cor. xi. 32.

Besides, the manner of the infliction speaks nothing but mercy: for, what a gentle hand doth my God lay upon me! as if he said, "I must correct thee, but I will not hurt thee." What gracious respites are here! what favourable inter-spirations! as if God bade me to recollect myself; and invited me to meet him, by a seasonable humiliation. This is not the fashion of anger and enmity, which, aiming only at destruction, endeavours to surprise the adversary; and to hurry him to a sudden execution.

Neither is it a mere affliction, that can evince either love or hatred: all is in the attendants, and entertainment of afflictions.

Where God means favour, he gives, together with the cross, an humble heart, a meek spirit, a patient submission to his good pleasure, a willingness to kiss the rod and the hand that wields it, a faithful dependance upon that arm from which we smart, and, lastly, a happy use and improvement of the suffering to the bettering of the soul. Whoso finds these dispositions in himself may well take up that resolution of the Sweet Singer of Israel, *It is good for me, that I have been afflicted. I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right; and that thou, in very faithfulness, hast afflicted me;* Ps. cxix. 71, 75.

Contrarily, where God smites in anger, those strokes are followed and accompanied with woeful symptoms of a spiritual malady: either a stupid senselessness and obduredness of heart; or an impatient murmuring at the stripes, saucy and presumptuous expostulations, fretting and repining at the smart, a perverse alienation of affection, and a rebellious swelling against God, an utter dejection of spirit, and, lastly, a heartless despair of mercy. Those, with whom thou hast prevailed so far as to draw them into this deadly condition of soul, have just cause to think themselves smitten in displeasure: but, as for me, blessed be the Name of my God, my stripes are medicinal and healing: *Let the righteous God thus smite me; it shall be a kindness: and let him reprove me; it shall be an excellent oil, that shall not break my head;* Ps. cxli. 5.

VIth. TEMPTATION:

"*Away with these superstitious fears and needless scruples, wherewith thou fondly troublest thyself: as if God, that sits above in the circle of heaven, regarded these poor businesses, that pass here below upon earth; or cared what this man doth, or that man suffereth. Dost thou not see, that none prosper so much in the world, as those, that are most noted for wickedness? and dost thou see any so miserable upon earth, as the holiest? Could it be thus, if there were a Providence, that overlooks and overrules these earthly affairs?*" Repelled.

The Lord rebuke thee, Satan; even that great Lord of Heaven and Earth, whom thou so wickedly blasphemest.

Wouldst thou persuade me, that he, who is infinite in power, is not also infinite in providence? He, whose infinite power made all creatures, both in heaven above and in earth beneath, shall not his infinite providence govern and dispose of all that he hath made?

Lo, how justly the Spirit of Wisdom calls thee and thy clients, fools and brutish things: *They say, The Lord shall not see, neither shall the God of Jacob regard. Understand, ye brutish among the people; and, ye fools, when will ye be wise? He, that planteth the ear, shall he not hear? he, that formed the eye, shall not he see? He, that teacheth man knowledge, shall not he know?* Ps. xciv. 7—10. It was no limited power, that could make this eye to see, this ear to hear, this heart to understand: and, if that eye, which he hath given us, can see all things that are within our prospect; and that ear, that he hath planted, can hear all sounds that are within our compass; and that heart, that he hath given us, can know all matters within the reach of our comprehension; how much more shall the sight, and hearing, and knowledge of that Infinite Spirit, which can admit of no bounds, extend to all the actions and events of all the creatures, that lie open before him that made them!

It is *in him, that we live, and move, and have our being*; Acts xvii. 28: and can we be so sottish, as to think we can steal a life from him, which he knows not of; or a motion, that he discerneth not?

That Word of his, by whom all creatures were made, hath told me, that *not one sparrow, two whereof are sold for a farthing, can fall to the ground without my Heavenly Father*; yea, that *the very hairs of our heads*, though a poor, neglected excrement, *are all numbered*; Matt. x. 29, 30: and can there be any thing more slight than they? How great care must we needs think is taken of the head, since not a hair can fall unregarded!

The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich: he bringeth down, and lifteth up. He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory; for the pillars of the earth are the Lord's, and he hath set the world upon them; 1 Sam. ii. 7, 8.

Even Rabshakeh himself spake truer than he was aware of: *Am I now come up without the Lord against this place?* 2 Kings xviii. 25. No, certainly, thou insolent blasphemer: thou couldst not move thy tongue, nor wag thy finger against God's inheritance, without the providence of that God, who returned answer to thy proud master, the King of Assyria; *I know thy abode, and thy going out, and thy coming in, and thy rage against me. Thy rage, and thy tumult, is come up into my ears: therefore, I will put a hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips; and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest;* 2 Kings xix. 27, 28. So true is that word of Elihu, *His eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings. There is no darkness nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves;* Job xxxiv. 21, 22: seconded by the holy Psalmist; *The Lord looketh from heaven: he beholdeth all the sons of men. From the place of his habitation, he looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth;* Ps. xxxiii. 13, 14.

Neither is this Divine Providence confined only to man, the prime piece of this visible creation; but, it extends itself to all the workmanship of the Almighty: *O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches: So is the great and wide sea; wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts. These wait all upon thee, that thou mayest give them their meat in due season. Thou givest it them; they gather: thou openest thy hand; they are filled with good;* Ps. civ. 24, 25, 27, 28. *The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God;* v. 21. *The ravens neither sow nor reap, nor have any storehouse or barn, yet God feedeth them. The lilies toil not, nor spin,* yet the great *God clothes them with more than Solomon's glory;* Luke xii. 24, 27. *Who knoweth not in all these, that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this? In whose hand is the soul of every living thing; and the breath of all mankind;* Job xii. 9, 10.

What dost thou then, O thou False Spirit, think to choke the Divine Providence with the smallness and multitude of objects? as if quantities or numbers could make any difference in the Infinite: as if one drop of water were not all one to the Almighty, with the whole deep; one corn of sand, with the whole mass of the earth: as if that hand, which graspeth the large circumference of the highest heaven, could let slip the least fly or worm upon earth: when thou feelest, to thy pain, that this eye of omniscience, and this hand of power, reaches even to thy nethermost hell; and sees and orders every of those torments, wherewith thou art everlastingly punished; and, at pleasure, puts bounds to thy malicious endeavours against his meanest creatures upon earth?

Thou tellest me of the wickedest men's prosperity. This is no new dart of thine; but the same, which thou hast thrown, of old, at many a faithful heart. Holy Job, David, Jeremiah, felt the dint of it: not without danger: but, without hurt.

It is true, wicked men flourish: what marvel is this? the world loves his own. Doth any man wonder to see the weeds overtop the

good herbs? They are natives to that soil, whereto the other are but strangers.

Wicked men prosper:—It is all the heaven they are like to have; and yet, alas, at the best it is but a woeful one: how intermixed with sorrows and discontentments! how full of uncertainties! how certain of ruin and confusion! It is a sure and sad interchange, whereof Father Abraham minds the man, who was now more full of torment than formerly of wealth: *Son, remember, that thou, in thy life-time, receivedst thy good things, and Lazarus evil; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented;* Luke xvi. 25.

The wicked man prospers: but, how long? *I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay-tree: Yet, he passed away; and, lo, he was not: I sought him; but he could not be found;* Ps. xxxvii. 35, 36.

The wicked prosper:—Alas, their welfare is their judgment! God doth not owe them so much favour, as to afflict them. They walk on merrily towards a deadly precipice. The just God lets them alone: and will not so much as molest their jollity, with a painful check.

The wicked thrive in the world:—How should they do other? Mammon is the God they serve; and what can he do less, than bless them with a miserable advantage? for, thus, *their wealth* is *made to them, an occasion of falling;* Ps. lxix. 22: *The prosperity of fools shall destroy them;* Prov. i. 32.

The wicked prosper:—Let me never prosper, if I envy them. Do not I see their day coming? Do not I know that they are merely fed up to the slaughter? Wherefore do the crammed fowls and fatted oxen fare better than their fellows? Is it out of favour; or is it, that they are designed to the dresser? Amnon is feasted with his brethren: those, that serve him, see death in his face. Belshazzar triumphs in mirth, carouseth freely in the sacred vessels: the hand writes upon the wall, *Thy days are numbered; thy kingdom finished;* Dan. v. 26. The revelling of the wicked, is but a lightning before an eternal death.

Thou tellest me, on the contrary, that the godly are persecuted, *afflicted, tormented;* Heb. xi. 37.

It is true. None knows it better than thyself, who, under the permission of the Most High, art the author of all their sufferings. It is thou, the Red Dragon, that standest ready to devour the masculine issue of God's Church; Rev. xii. 4, 13. It is thou, that, when the persecuted woman flees into the wilderness, pourest out of thy mouth, after her, floods of water to drown her; v. 15. It is thou, that inspirest tyrants with rage against the innocent Saints of God; and actuatest their hellish cruelty. But, when thou hast all done, the Most Wise and Mighty Arbiter of Heaven turns all this to the advantage of his dear ones upon earth. The blood of the Martyrs doth and shall prove the seed of the Church; whereof every grain yields thirty, sixty, a hundred fold: neither had the Church of God been so numerous, if there had been less malice in thy prosecution; Acts vii. 52. And, as for those several Chris-

tians, that have undergone the worst of thy fury, they are so far from finding cause of complaint, that they rejoice and triumph in the happy issue of their intended miseries: they can say to thee, as Joseph said of old to his once envious brethren, *Thou thoughtest evil against us, but God meant it unto good;* Gen. l. 20: they had not now sat so gloriously crowned in the highest heaven, if thou hadst not persecuted them unto blood.

None are so afflicted, thou sayest, as the godly:—True: their Saviour hath told them, beforehand, what to trust to: *In the world ye shall have tribulation;* John xvi. 33. Have they any reason to look for better measure, than their Blessed Redeemer? *If the world hate you,* saith he, *ye know that it hated me, before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you;* Matt. xxiv. 9. Luke xxi. 12, 13. John xv. 18, 19. 2 Tim. iii. 12. Now, welcome, welcome that hate, that is raised from our Dear Saviour's love and election. Woe were us, if we were not thus hated! Let the world hate and hurt us thus still, so we may be the favourites of heaven.

None fare so ill on earth as the godly, both living and dead: *The dead bodies of God's servants have they given to be meat to the fowls of the heaven; the flesh of his Saints, unto the beasts of the field: Their blood have they shed like water; and there was none to bury them. They are become a reproach to their neighbours; a scorn and derision to them, that are round about them;* Ps. lxxix. 2, 3, 4:—Oh, the poor impotent malice of wicked spirits and men! What matters it, if our carcases rot upon earth, while our souls shine in heavenly glory? Rev. xvi. 6. What matters it, if, for a while, *we be made a gazing-stock to the world, to angels, and to men;* 1 Cor. iv. 9: while the Son of God hath assured us of an eternal royalty? *To him, that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me in my throne; even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne;* Rev. iii. 21.

None are so ill-entreated as the godly:—It is true: for none are so happy as they: *Blessed are they, which are persecuted for righteousness' sake; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil of you falsely, for my sake: Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven;* Matt. v. 10, 11, 12. Who would not endure wrongs a while, to be everlastingly recompensed? Here is not place only for patience, but for joy, and that exceeding; in respect of a reward, so infinitely glorious. It is no marvel then, if we be bidden to *pray for them which despitefully use* us, *and persecute* us; Matt. v. 44: these are the men, that are our great benefactors: and, though full sore against their wills, contribute to our eternal blessedness.

The wicked triumph, while the righteous are trampled upon:—What marvel? we are in a middle region, betwixt heaven and hell; but nearer to this latter, which is the place of confusion. It is but staying awhile, and each place will be distinctly peopled with his

own. There is a large and glorious heaven, appointed for the everlasting receptacle of the just; a hell, for the godless: till then, the eternal wisdom hath determined, for his most holy ends, to give way to this confused mixture, and to this seeming inequality of events. How easy were it for him, to make all heaven! but he hath a justice to glorify, as well as a mercy: and, in the mean time, it is the just praise of his infinite power, wisdom, goodness, that he can fetch the greatest good, out of the worst of evils.

All things go cross here: the righteous droop; the wicked flourish:—The end shall make amends for all. The world is a stage: every man acts his part. The wise compiler of this great interlude hath so contrived it, that the middle scenes shew nothing but intricacy and perplexedness: the unskilful spectator is ready to censure the plot; and thinks he sees such unpleasing difficulties in the carriage of affairs, as can never be reconciled: but, by that time he have sat it out, he shall see all brought about to a meet accordance; and all shut up in a happy applause. *Blessed is the man, that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him;* James i. 12.

The world is an apothecary's shop, wherein there are all manner of drugs; some poisonous, others cordial. An ignorant, that comes in, and knows only the quality, not the use of those receipts, will straight be ready to say, "What do these unwholesome simples, these dangerous minerals, these deadly juices here?" But the learned and skilful artist knows how so to temper all these noxious ingredients, that they shall turn antidotes; and serve for the health of his patient. Thus doth the Most High and Holy God order these earthly, though noxious, compositions, to the glory of his Great Name, and to the advantage of his chosen: so as that suggestion, wherewith thou meanest to batter the Divine Providence of the Almighty, doth invincibly fortify it; his most wise permission and powerful overruling of evil actions and men through the whole world, to his own honour, and the benefit of his Church.

VIIth. TEMPTATION:

"*If God be never so liberal in his promises and sure in performances of mercy, to his own; yet, what is that to thee? thou art none of his, neither canst lay any just claim to his election:*" Repelled.

How boldly can I defy thee, O thou Lying Spirit, while I have the assurance of him, who is the Word of Truth! How confidently dare I challenge thee upon that unfailing testimony, which shall stand *till heaven and earth shall pass;* Matt. v. 18. *Ye, that have believed in Christ, are sealed with that Holy Spirit of Promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory!* Eph. i. 13, 14.

Lo here a double assurance, which all the powers of hell shall in vain labour to defeat; the Almighty's Seal and his Earnest: both made and given to the believer; and therefore to me.

In spite of all temptations, I believe, and know whom I have believed. I can accuse my faith of weakness: thou canst not convince it of untruth. And all the precious promises of the Gospel, and all the gracious engagements of God, are made, not to the measure, but to the truth of our belief: and why should not I as truly know, that I rely upon the word of my Saviour; as I know, that I distrust and reject thine?

Since then I am a subject truly capable of this mercy, what can hinder me from enjoying it? Cheer thyself up therefore, O my soul, with this undefeasible confidence, that thou hast God's seal, and his earnest for thy salvation.

Even an honest man will not be less than his word; but if his hand have seconded his tongue, he holds the obligation yet stronger; but if his seal shall be further added to his hand, there is nothing that can give more validity to the grant or contract. Yet, even of the value of seals, there is much difference: the seal of a private man carries so much authority, as his person; the seal of a community hath so much more security in it, as there are more persons interested: but the signet of a King hath wont to be held, to all purposes, authentical; as we find, to omit Ahab, in the signatures of Ahasuerus and Darius. Who desires any better assurance for the estate of him and his posterity, than the Great Seal? And, behold, here is no less than the Great Seal of Heaven for my election and salvation; *Ye are sealed with the Spirit of Promise.*

But, lest thou shouldest plead this to be but a grant of the future; and therefore, perhaps, upon some intervenient misdemeanors or unkindness taken, reversible; know, that here is, yet further, an actual conveyance of this mercy to me; in that here is an earnest given me, beforehand, of a perfect accomplishment: an earnest, that both binds the assurance, and stands for part of payment, of that great sum of glory which abides for me in heaven.

This seal I shew; this earnest I produce: so as my securance is unfailable.

And, that thou mayest not plead this seal to be counterfeit, set on only with a stamp of presumption and self-love; know, that here is the true and clear impression of God's Spirit, in all the lines of that gracious signature: a right, though weak, illumination of mind, in the true apprehension of heavenly things; sincerity of holy desires; truth of inchoate holiness: unfeignedness of Christian charity; constant purposes and endeavours of perfect obedience.

And, as for my earnest, it can no more disappoint me, than the hand that gave it. My soul is possessed with true, however imperfect, grace: and what is grace, but the beginning of glory? and what is glory, but the consummation of grace? What should I regard thy cavils, while I have these pledges of the Almighty?

It is not in thy power, Malicious Spirit, to sever those things, which God's eternal decree hath put together. Our *calling* and

election are thus conjoined from eternity; 2 Pet. i. 10: all the craft and force of hell cannot divorce them: *Whom he did predestinate, them also he called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justifieth, them also he glorifieth;* Rom. viii. 30.

It is true, that, outwardly, many are called; but few chosen: but none are inwardly called, which are not also chosen.

In which number, is my poor soul; whereto God hath shewed mercy, in singling it out of this wicked world, into the liberty of the sons of God. For, do not I find myself sensibly changed from what I was? Am I not evidently freed from the bondage of those natural corruptions, under which thou heldst me miserably captived? Do I not hate the courses of my former disobedience? Do I not give willing ear to the voice of the Gospel? Do I not desire and endeavour to conform myself wholly to the will of my God and Saviour? Do I not heartily grieve for my spiritual failings? Do not I earnestly pray for grace to resist all thy temptations? Do not I cordially affect the means of grace and salvation? Do I not labour, in all things, to keep a good conscience before God and men? Are not these the infallible proofs of my calling, and the sure and certain fruits of mine election? Canst thou hope to persuade me, that God will bestow these favours, where he loves not? that he will repent him of such mercies? that he will lose the thanks and honour of so gracious proceedings? Suggest what thou wilt, I am more than *confident, that he, who hath begun this good work in* me, *will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ;* Phil. i. 6. Do not I hear the Chosen Vessel tell his Thessalonians, that he knows them to be elected of God? And upon what grounds doth he raise this assurance? *For*, saith he, *our Gospel came not to you in word only; but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost;* 1 Thess. i. 5. That, which can assure us of another man's election, may much more secure us of our own; the entertainment and success of the Gospel in our souls. Lo, that blessed word hath wrought in me a sensible abatement of my corrupt affections; and hath produced an apparent renovation of my mind; and hath quickened me to a new life of grace and obedience: this can be no work of nature: this can be no other, than the work of that Spirit, *whereby* I am *sealed to the day of redemption;* Eph. iv. 30. My heart feels the power of the Gospel; my life expresses it; maugre all thy malice: therefore, I am elected.

When the gates of hell have done their worst, none of God's children can miscarry: For *if children, then they are heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ;* Rom. viii. 17: Now, *as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God;* v. 14: and this is the direction, that I follow.

There are but three guides, that I can be led by; my own will, thy suggestions, the motions of God's Spirit. For my own will, I were no Christian, if I had not learned to deny it, where it stands opposite to the will of my God. As for thy suggestions, I hate and defy them. They are only, therefore, the motions of that Good Spirit, which I desire to follow: and if, at any time, my own

frailty have betrayed me to some aberrations, my repentance hath overtaken my offence; and, in sincerity of heart, I can say with a holier man, *I have gone astray like a sheep: seek thy servant; for I do not forget thy commandments;* Ps. cxix. 176. All thy malice, therefore, cannot rob me of the comfort of mine adoption.

It is no marvel if thou, who art all enmity, canst not abide to hear of love; but *God*, who *is love*, hath told me, that *love is of God; and*, that *every one, that loveth, is born of God;* 1 John iv. 8, 7: and, that by this *we know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren;* 1 John iii. 14. Now my heart can irrefragably witness to me, that I love God because he is good; infinitely good in himself, and infinitely good to me: and that I love good men, because they are his sons, my brethren. I am, therefore, as surely passed from death to life, as if I had set my foot over the threshold of heaven.

VIIIth. TEMPTATION:

"*Alas, poor man, how grossly deludest thou thyself? thou talkest of thy faith; and bearest thyself high upon this grace; and thinkest to do great matters by it: whereas, the truth is, thou hast no faith; but that, which thou miscallest so, is nothing else but mere presumption:*" Repelled.

Is it any wonder that thou shouldest slander the graces of God, who art ever ready to calumniate the Giver? No, Tempter: canst thou challenge this faith of mine, which thou censurest, to be thine own work? such it should be, if it were presumption. Were it presumption, wouldest thou oppose it? wouldest thou not foster and applaud it as thine? The presumption is thine; who darest thus derogate from the gracious work of the Almighty; and fasten sin upon the Holy Spirit. Mine is faith: yet so mine, as that it is his, that wrought it.

There is not more difference betwixt thee and an angel of light, than betwixt my faith and thy presumption.

True faith (such is mine, after all thy slanderous suggestions) is grounded upon sound knowledge; and that knowledge, upon an infallible word. Whereas presumption rests only upon opinion and conceit: built upon the sands of self-love. Whence it is, that the most ignorant are ever the most presumptuous; when the knowing soul sees what dangers it is to encounter, and provides for them with an awful resolution.

True faith never comes without careful and diligent use of means. The word, sacraments, prayer, meditation are but enough, with their conjoined forces, to produce so divine a work. Whereas presumption comes with ease: it costs nothing; no strife, no labour to draw forth so worthless and vicious a disposition: yea, rather, corrupt nature is forward, not only to offer it to us, but even

to force it upon our admission; and it is no small mastery, to repel it.

True faith struggles with infidelity. This Jacob is wrestling with this Esau, in the womb of the soul: and if, at any time, the worse part, through the violence of a temptation, get the start of the better, the hand lays hold on the heel, and suffers not itself to be any other than insensibly prevented; but recovers the light, ere the suggestion can be fully completed; and, at last, so far prevails, that the elder shall serve the younger: *This is the victory, that overcomes the world, even our faith*; 1 John v. 4. Whereas presumption is ever quiet and secure; not fearing any peril; not combating with any doubt; pleasing itself in its own ease and safety; and, in the confidence of a perpetual prosperity, can say, *I shall never be moved*; Ps. xxx. 6.

True faith, wheresoever it is, *purifieth the heart*; Acts xv. 9: and will not suffer any known sin to harbour there; and is ever attended with care, awfulness, love, obedience. Whereas presumption impures the soul; and works it to boldness, obduration, false joy, security, senselessness.

True faith grows daily; like the grain of mustard-seed in the Gospel, which, from small beginnings, arises to a tall and large-spreading plant. Presumption hath enough, and sits down contented with its own measure; applauding the happiness of its own condition.

True faith, like gold, comes out pure from the fire of temptation; and, like to sound friendship, is most helpful in the greatest need. Presumption, upon the easiest trial, vanisheth into smoke and dross; and is never so sure to fail us, as in the evil day.

So, then, this firm affiance of mine, being grounded upon the most sure promises of the God of Truth, upon frequent use and improvement of all holy means, after many bickerings with thy motions of unbelief; being attended with holy and purifying dispositions of the soul; and gathering still more strength, and growing up daily towards a longed-for perfection; and which, now, thy experience convinces thee, to be most present and comfortable in the hour of temptation, is true faith: not, as thou falsely suggestest, a false presumption.

It is true, my unworthiness is great; but I have to do with an Infinite Mercy: so as my wretched unworthiness doth but heighten the glory of his most merciful pardon and acceptation.

Shortly, then, where there is a divine promise of free grace and mercy, a true apprehension and embracing of that promise, a warrant and acceptance of that apprehension, a willing reliance upon that warrant, a sure knowledge and sense of that reliance, there can be no place for presumption.

This is the case betwixt God and my soul. His word of promise and warrant, that cannot deceive me, is, *He, that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life*; John iii. 36: and, *He, that believes in him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but hath passed from death to life*; John v. 24. My

own heart irrefragably makes out the rest, which is the truth of my apprehension, reliance, knowledge. Mine, therefore, is the faith: the presumption, in casting slander upon the grace of God's Spirit, is thine own.

IXth. TEMPTATION:

"*Thou thoughtest perhaps once, that thou hadst some tokens of God's favour: but now, thou canst not but find that he hath utterly forsaken thee; and, withdrawing himself from thee, hath given thee up into my hands; to which thy sins have justly forfeited thee:*" Repelled.

Be not discouraged, O thou weak soul, with this malicious suggestion of the enemy. Thou art not the first, nor the holiest, that hath been thus assailed.

So hard was the man after God's own heart driven with this temptation, that he cries out, in the bitterness of his soul, *Will the Lord cast* me *off for ever? and will he be favourable no more? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? Doth his promise fail for evermore?* Ps. lxxvii. 7—9.

Thy case was his, for the sense of the desertion: why should not his case be thine, for the remedy? Mark how happily and how soon he recovers himself: *And I said, This is my infirmity: but I will remember the years of the right-hand of the Most High: I will remember the works of the Lord: surely, I will remember thy wonders of old: I will meditate of all thy works;* vv. 10—12.

Lo, how wisely and faithfully David retreats back to the sure hold of God's formerly experimented mercies; and there finds a sensible relief. He, that, when he was to encounter with the proud giant, could, beforehand, arm himself with the proof of God's former deliverances and victories; *Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear, and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them;* 1 Sam. xvii. 36: now animates himself, after the temptation, against the spiritual Goliath, with the like remembrance of God's ancient mercies and endearments to his soul; as well knowing, that, whatever we are, God cannot but be himself: *God is not as a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent;* Num. xxiii. 19: *Having loved his own, which were in the world, he loved them unto the end;* John xiii. 1.

Hast thou, therefore, formerly found the sure testimonies of God's favour to thee, in the real pledges of his holy graces? live thou still, while thou art thus besieged with temptations, upon the old store. Know, that thou hast to do with a God, that can no more change, than not be: Satan cannot be more constant to his malice, than thy God is to his everlasting mercies. He may, for a time, be pleased to withdraw himself from thee; but it is, that he may make thee so much more happy in his re-appearance. It is

his own word, *For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath, I hid my face from thee for a moment; but, with everlasting kindness, will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord, thy Redeemer;* Is. liv. 7, 8.

In the case wherein thou now art, thou canst be no meet judge, either of God's respects to thee, or thine own condition. Can the aguish palate pass any true judgment upon the taste of liquors? Can the child entertain any apprehension of his parent's favour, while he is under the lash? Can any man look that the fire should give either flame or heat, while it lies covered with ashes? Can any man expect fruit or leaves from the tree, in the midst of winter? Thou art now in a fit of temptation: thou art now smarting under the rod of correction: thy faith lies raked up under the cold ashes of a seeming desertion: the vegetative life of thy soul is, in this hard season of thy trial, drawn inward, and run down to the root: thine estate is, nevertheless, safe for this, though more uncomfortable. Wait thou upon God's leisure, with all humble submission; the event shall be happy: when the distemper is once over, thou shalt return to thy true relish of God's mercy: when thy Heavenly Father shall smile upon thee, and take thee up in his arms, thou wilt see love in his late stripes: when those dead ashes shall be removed, and the gleeds of grace stirred up again in thee, thou shalt yield both light and warmth: when the Sun of Righteousness shall approach to thee, and with his comfortable beams draw up the sap into the branches, thou shalt blossom and flourish. In the mean time, fear nothing: only believe, and thou shalt see the salvation of the Lord. Thy soul is in surer hands than thine own; yea, than of the greatest angel in heaven: far out of the reach of all the powers of hell; for, *Our life is hid with Christ in God;* Col. iii. 3: hid; not lost, not laid open to all eyes, but hid: hid, where Satan cannot touch it, cannot find it; even with Christ, in the heaven of heavens.

Fear not, therefore, O thou feeble soul, any utter dereliction of thy God. Thou art bought with a price: God paid too dear for thee, and is too deeply engaged to thee, to lose thee willingly; and, for any force to be offered to the Almighty, what can men or devils do?

And, if that malignant spirit shall challenge any forfeiture, plead thou thy full redemption. It is true, the eternal and inviolable law hath said, *Cursed is every one, that continueth not in all things, that are written in the book of the Law, to do them;* Gal. iii. 10: and, *The soul, that sinneth, shall die;* Ezek. xviii. 4, 20. Death, and curse, is therefore due to thee: but thou hast paid both of these, in thy Blessed Redeemer; *Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us;* Gal. iii. 13. *Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound; that, as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign, through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ, our Lord;* Rom. v. 20, 21. It is all one, to pay thy debt in thine own person, and by thy surety. Thy Gracious Surety hath staked it down for thee, to the utmost far-

thing. Be confident, therefore, of thy safe condition: thou art no less sure, than thine adversary is malicious.

XTH. TEMPTATION:

"*Had God ever given thee any sure testimonies of his love, thou mightest, perhaps, pretend to some reason of comfort and confidence: but, the truth is, God never loved thee: he may have cast upon thee some common favours, such as he throws away upon reprobates; but, for the tokens of any special love that he bears to thee, thou never didst, never shalt receive any from him:*" Repelled.

THIS is language well befitting the professed make-bait betwixt God and man: but know, O thou False Tempter, that I have received sure and infallible testimonies of that special love, which is proper to his elect.

First, then, (as I have to do with a bountiful God, who where he loves, there he enriches; so) I have received most precious gifts from his hands: such, as do not import a common and ordinary beneficence, which he scatters promiscuously amongst the sons of men; but such, as carry in them a dearness and singularity of divine favour: even the greatest gifts, that either he can give, or man receive.

For, first, *he hath given* me *his Spirit; the Spirit of Adoption, whereby* I can *call him Father;* for the assurance whereof, *The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God;* 1 John iv. 13. Rom. viii. 15, 16. Deny, if thou canst, the invaluableness of this heavenly gift: and, if thy malice cannot detract from the worth, but from the propriety; yielding it to be great, but denying it to be mine; know, O thou Envious Spirit, that here is the witness of two spirits combined against thine: were the testimonies single, surely I had reason to believe my own spirit, rather than thine, which is a spirit of error; but, now that the Spirit of God conjoins his inerrable testimony together with my spirit, against thy single suggestion, how just cause have I to be confident of my possession of that glorious and blessed gift! Neither is that Good Spirit dead or dumb, but vocal and operative: it gives me a tongue to call God, Father: it teacheth me to pray: it *helpeth* mine *infirmities, and maketh intercession for* me, *with groanings which cannot be uttered;* Rom. viii. 26: it worketh effectually in me a sensible conversion: even when I was *dead in sins and trespasses, God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved* me, hath, by this Spirit of his, *quickened* me *together with Christ; and hath raised* me *up together with him;* Eph. ii. 1, 4, 5, 6. By the blessed effects, therefore, of his regenerating Spirit happily begun in my soul, I find how rich a treasure the Father of Mercies hath conveyed into my bosom. Besides, my life shews

what is in my heart: it was a gracious word, that God spake to his people of old, and holds for ever; *I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes: I will also save you from all your uncleannesses;* Ezek. xxxvi. 27, 29. The Spirit of God can never be severed from obedience. If the heart be taken up with the Holy Spirit, the feet must walk in God's statutes; 1 John v. 3: and both heart and life must be freed from all wilful uncleannesses. I feel that God hath wrought all this in me: from him it is, that I do sincerely desire and endeavour to make straight steps in all the ways of God; and to avoid and abhor all those foul corruptions of my sinful nature. Flesh and blood hath not, would not, could not work this in me: *The Spirit*, therefore, *of him, who raised up Jesus from the dead, dwells in* me; Rom. viii. 11. And, if this be not a pledge of his dearest love, heaven cannot yield one.

Moreover, he hath bestowed upon me another gift, more worth than all the world; his Own Son; the Son of his Love; the Son of his Nature, by eternal generation: whom he hath not only given for me, in a generality with the rest of mankind; but hath, by a special donation, conveyed unto me, and, as it were, put into my bosom, in that he hath enabled me, by a lively faith, to bring him home unto my soul; and hath thus, by a particular application, made him mine, so as my soul is not more mine than he is my soul's. And, having given me his son, he hath, with him, given me all things. If there can be greater tokens of love than these, let me want them.

Besides his gifts, his carriage doth abundantly argue his love. Were there a strangeness between God and my soul, I might well fear there were no other than overly respects from him towards me: but now, when I find he doth so freely and familiarly converse with his servant, and so graciously impart himself to me, renewing the daily testimonies of his holy presence in the frequent motions of his Good Spirit, answered by the returns of an humble and thankful obedience; here is not love only, but entireness. What other is that poor measure of love, which our wretched meanness can return unto our God, but a weak reflection of that fervent love, which he bears unto us? It is the word of Divine Wisdom, *I love them, that love me;* Prov. viii. 17: and the Disciple of Love can tell us the due order of love; *We love him, because he first loved us;* 1 John iv. 19. *The love of God*, therefore, which *is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us*, Rom. v. 5. is an all-sufficient conviction of God's tender love unto us. My heart tells me then, that I love God truly, though weakly: God tells me, that he embraceth me with an everlasting love, which thy malice may snarl at, but can never abate.

TEMPTATIONS REPELLED.

THE THIRD DECADE.

TEMPTATIONS OF ALLUREMENT.

1ST. TEMPTATION:

"*Thou hast hitherto, thus long, given entertainment to thy sin, and no inconveniency hath ensued, no evil hath befallen thee: thy affairs have prospered better than thy scrupulous neighbour's: why shouldst thou shake off a companion, that hath been both harmless and pleasant? Go on, man: sin fearlessly: thou shalt speed no worse, than thou hast done: Go on, and thrive in thine old course; while some precisely conscientious beg and starve in their innocence!*" Repelled.

IT is right so, as wise Solomon observed of old: *Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily; therefore, the hearts of the sons of men are fully set in them to do evil;* Eccl. viii. 11.

Wicked Spirit! what a deadly fallacy is this, which thou puttest upon miserable souls! Because they have aged in their sins, therefore they must die in them: because they have lived in sin, therefore they must age in it: because they have prospered in their sin, therefore they must live in it: whereas, all these should be strong arguments to the contrary. There cannot be a greater proof of God's disfavour, than for a man to prosper in wickedness: neither can there be a more forcible inducement to a man to forsake his sin, than this, that he hath entertained it.

What dost thou other in this, than persuade the poor sinner to *despise the riches of the goodness, and forbearance, and longsuffering* of God, which should *lead* him *to repentance; and, after* his *hardness and impenitent heart,* to *treasure up unto* himself *wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God?* Rom. ii. 4, 5. What a horrible abuse is this of divine mercy! That, which is intended to lead us to repentance, is now urged by thee to draw us from repentance. Should the justice of God have cut off the sinner in the flagrance of his wicked fact, there had been no room for his penitence; and, now God gives him a fair

respite for his repentance, thou turnest this into a provocation of sinning.

Let the case, for the present, be mine. If sin have so far bewitched me, as to win me to dally with it, must I therefore be wedded to it? or, if I be once wedded to it through the importunity of temptation, shall I be tied to a perpetual cohabitation with that fiend; and not free myself by a just divorce? Because I have once yielded to be evil, must I therefore be worse? Because I have happily, by the mercy of my God, escaped hell in sinning, shall I wilfully run myself headlong into the pit, by continuing in sin? No, Wicked One: I know how to make better use of God's favour, and my own miscarriages. I cannot reckon it amongst my comforts, that I prospered in evil. Let obdured hearts bless themselves in such advantages; but I adore that goodness, that forbore me in my iniquity: neither dare provoke it any more. Think not to draw me on by the lucky success of my sin, which thou hast wanted no endeavour to promote. Better had it been for me, if I had fared worse in the course of my sinning: but, had I been yet outwardly more happy, do I not know that God vouchsafes his showers and his sunshine to the fields of those, whose persons he destines to the fire? Can I be ignorant of that, which holy Job observed in his time, that *the tabernacles of the wicked prosper; and they, that provoke God, are secure: into whose hands God bringeth abundantly?* Job xii. 6: that *they spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave?* ch. xxi. 13: and, as the Psalmist seconds him, *There are no bands in their death, but their strength is firm: They are not in trouble, like other men: therefore pride compasseth them about as a chain?* Ps. lxxiii. 4, 5. And let these jolly men brave it out, in the glorious pomp of their unjust greatness: the same eyes, that noted their exaltation, have also observed their downfal: *They are exalted for a little while,* saith Job; *but they are gone, and brought low: they are taken out of the way, as all others; and cut off, as the tops of the ears of corn;* Job xxiv. 24: and in his answer to Zophar, *Where are the dwelling-places of the wicked? Have ye not asked them that go by the way? and do ye not know their tokens? That the wicked is reserved to the day of destruction: they shall be brought forth to the day of wrath;* ch. xxi. 28, 29, 30. *The eyes of the wicked,* even those scornful and contemptuous eyes which they have cast upon God's poor despised ones, *shall fail; and they shall not escape; and their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost;* ch. xi. 20.

How false an inference then is this, whereby thou goest about to delude my soul; "Thou hast hitherto prospered in thy wickedness: therefore thou shalt prosper in it, still and ever: to-morrow shall be as yesterday, and more abundant!" As if the just God had not set a period to iniquity. As if he had not said to the most insolent sinner, as to the raging sea, *Here shalt thou stay thy proud waves.* How many rich Epicures have, with Crassus, supped in Apollo; and broken their fast with Beelzebub, the prince of devils! How many have lain down to sleep out their surfeit, and have waked in

hell! Were my times in thy hand, thou wouldest not suffer me long to enjoy my sin, and forbear the seizure of my soul; but, now they are in the hands of a righteous God, who is jealous of his own glory, he will be sure not to over-pass those hours, which he hath set for thy torment, or my account.

Shortly, therefore, I will withdraw my foot from every evil way, and walk holily with my God; however I speed in the world. Let me, with the conscientious men, beg or starve, in my innocence; rather than thrive, in my wickedness, and get hell to boot.

IID. TEMPTATION:

"*Sin still: thou shall repent soon enough, when thou canst sin no more: thine old age and death-bed are fit seasons for those sad thoughts. It will go hard, if thou mayest not, at the last, have a mouthful of breath left thee, to cry God mercy: and that is no sooner asked, than had. Thou hast to do with a God of Mercies; with whom no time is too late, no measure too slight to be accepted:*" Repelled.

Of all the blessed attributes of God, whereby he is willing to make himself known unto men, there is none by which he more delights to be set forth, than that of mercy: when, therefore, he would proclaim his style to Moses, this is the title which he most insists upon: *The Lord, the Lord God; merciful and gracious; longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth; Keeping mercy for thousands; forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin;* Exodus xxxiv. 6, 7. And all his holy heralds, the Prophets, have still been careful to blazon him thus to the world; Num. xiv. 18. Ps. ciii. 8. cxlv. 8, 9. Exod. xx. 6. Ps. lxxxvi. 15. Neh. ix. 30, 31. Lam. iii. 31. Jonah iv. 2. Micah vii. 18. Ps. lxxii. 13.

Neither is there any of those divine attributes, that is so much abused by men, as this, which is most beneficial to mankind. For the wisdom of God, every man professes to adore it: for the power of God, every man magnifies it: for the justice of God, every man trembles at it: but, for the mercy and longsufferance of God, how apt are men and devils to wrong it, by a sinful misapplication!

Wicked Tempter, how ready art thou to mis-improve God's patience to the encouragement of my sin; and to persuade me therefore to offend him, because he is good; and to continue in sin, because grace abounds!

Thou biddest me sin still: God forbids me, upon pain of death, to sin at all: whether should I listen to?

God calls me to a speedy repentance: thou persuadest me to defer it: whether counsel should I hold more safe? Surely, there cannot be but danger, in the delay of it: in the speed, there can be nothing but a comfortable hope of acceptation. It is not pos-

sible for me to repent too soon : too late, I may. To repent for my sin, when I can sin no more, what would it be other, than to be sorry that I can no more sin ? and what thank is it to me, that I would, and am disabled to offend ?

Thou tellest me, that mine age and death-bed are meet seasons for my repentance : as if time and grace were in my power to command. How know I, whether I shall live till age ? yea, till to-morrow ? yea, till the next hour ? Do not I see how fickle my life is ? and shall I, with the Foolish Virgins, delay the buying of my oil, till the doors be shut ? But, let me live : have I repentance in a string, that I may pull it to me when I list ? is it not the great gift of that Good Spirit, which breatheth when and where it pleaseth ? it is now offered to me in this time of grace : if I now refuse it, perhaps I may seek it, with tears, in vain. I know the gates of hell stand always wide open, to receive all comers : not so the gates of heaven : they are shut upon the impenitent ; and never opened, but in the seasons of mercy. The porches of Bethesda were full of cripples, expecting cure : those waters were not always sanative : if, when the Angel descends and moves the water, we take not our first turn, we may wait too long. But, of all other, that season, whereon thou pitchest, my death-bed, is most unseasonable for this work, most serviceable for thy purpose. How many thousand souls hast thou deluded with this plausible, but deadly suggestion ! for then, alas, how is the whole man taken up, with the sense of pain ; with grappling with the disease ; with answering the condoling of friends ; with disposing the remainder of our estate ; with repelling, then most importunate, temptations ; with encountering the horrors and pangs of an imminent dissolution ! And what room is there then for a serious task of repentance ? No, Wicked One, I see thy drift : thou wouldest fain persuade me to do like some idle wanton servants, who play and talk out their candle-light, and then go darklings to bed : I hate the motion ; and do gladly embrace this happy opportunity, which God holds forth to me, of my present conversion.

Thou tellest me how hard it would be, if I should not have one mouthful of breath, at the last, to implore mercy : I tell thee of many a one, that hath not had so much ; neither hath it been hard, but just, that those, who have had so many and earnest solicitations from a merciful God, and have given a deaf ear to them, should not, at the last, have a tongue to ask that mercy, which they have so often refused. But, let me have wind enough left to redouble the name of mercy, am I sure, upon so short warning, to obtain it ? How many are there, that shall say, *Lord, Lord ;* and yet shall be answered with *Depart from me, I know you not ?* Do I not hear that God, whom vain men frame all of mercy, say, even of his Israel, *I will not pity, nor spare, nor have mercy ; but destroy them ?* Jer. xiii. 14. There is a time for judgment, as well as a time for mercy : neither of these may encroach upon other ; as judgment may not be allowed to seize upon the soul, during the season of mercy ; so neither may mercy put forth itself to reverse

the soul, in an execution of judgment: both must have their due turns: let me sue, therefore, for grace, ere the time of grace be overpassed. Heaven is as a strong castle, whereto there is but one way of entrance: the drawbridge is let down all the day: all that while, the passage is open: let me stay till night, the bridge is hoisted up, the way precluded: I may now stand without; and call long enough, for a hopeless admittance. It shall be my care to get within those gates, ere my sun be set; while the willing neglecters of mercy shall find hell open, heaven inaccessible.

IIId. TEMPTATION:

"*Thou art one of God's chosen. Now God sees no sin in his elect; none, therefore, in thee: neither mayest thou then take notice of any sin in thyself, or needest any repentance for thy sin:*" Repelled.

Deceitful Tempter! now thou wouldest fain flatter me into hell; and make God's favour a motive of my damnation. I doubt not but I am, through God's mercy, one of his chosen: his free grace in Christ, my Saviour, hath put upon me this honour; neither will I fear to challenge any of the happy privileges of my election.

But, that this should be one of the special prerogatives of grace, that God should see no sin in me, I hate to hear. That God imputes no sin to his elect, is a divine truth: but, that he sees no sin in his elect, is a conceit hatched in hell.

For, tell me, thou Antinomian Spirit, if God see no sin in his elect, is the reason on the behalf of God; or, of the sin? either for that there is no sin at all to be seen; or, for that, though there be sin in them, yet God sees it not?

If the former, it must be either in relation to the person of the sinner, or to the act and nature of the sin: either, that he cannot do that act, which is formally sin; or, that, though he do such an act, yet in him it is no sin.

If the latter, it must be either for the defect of his omniscience, or upon a willing connivance.

In each of these, there is gross error: in some of them, blasphemy.

For, first, what can be more evident, than that the holiest of God's elect upon earth fall, and that not infrequently, into sin? *Who can say, I have made my heart clean: I am pure from my sin?* Prov. xx. 9. was the just challenge of wise Solomon. And his father, before him, said no less: *There is none that doeth good, no not one;* Ps. xiv. 3. Rom. iii. 12: and, elsewhere, *Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from my secret faults;* Ps. xix. 12. *We all,* saith the Prophet Isaiah, putting himself into the number, *have like sheep gone astray: we have turned every one to his own ways;* Is. liii. 6. And wherefore were those legal expiations of

old by the blood of their sacrifices, but for the acknowledged sins both of priests and people? Levit. iv. 2, 13, 22. Num. xv. 24. Persuade us, if thou canst, that our election exempts us from being men: for, certainly, while we are men, we cannot but be sinners: so sure is that parenthesis of Solomon, *There is no man, that sinneth not;* 1 Kings viii. 46. as that, *If we say we have no sin, we* both *deceive ourselves, and make God a liar;* 1 John i. 8, 10.

What then? That, which in itself is sin, is it not sin in the elect? Doth evil turn good, as it falls from their person? Where did the Holy God infuse such virtue into any creature? Surely, so deadly is the infection of sin, that it makes the person evil: but, that the holiness of the person should make the sin less evil, is a hellish monster of opinion. Yea, so far is it from that, as that the holiness of the person adds to the heinousness of the sin: the adultery had not been so odious, if a David had not committed it; nor the abjuration of Christ so grievous, if it had not fallen from him that said, *Though all men, yet not I.* Sin is sin, even in an angel; and the worse, for the eminence of the actor: for what is sin but *the transgression of the law*, in whomsoever? 1 John iii. 4. Wheresoever, therefore, transgression is, there is guilt. And such, the best of all God's Saints have acknowledged and lamented in themselves: *Woe is me*, saith the Prophet Isaiah, *for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips;* ch. vi. 5. *The evil, that I would not do, that I do*, saith the Chosen Vessel; Rom. vii. 19. Yea, *in many things*, saith St. James, *we offend all;* James iii. 2.

It is true, that, as the Beloved Disciple hath taught us, *He, that is born of God, sinneth not;* 1 John v. 18. iii. 9: not that he may not fall into the same act of sin with the most carnal man, but that he sins not in the same manner: the one sins with all his heart, with the full sway of his will; the other, not without a kind of renitency: the one makes a trade of his sin; the other steps only aside through the vehemence of a temptation: the one sins with a high hand; the other, out of mere infirmity: the one walks on securely and resolutely, as obfirmed in his wickedness; the other is smitten with a seasonable remorse for his offence: the one delights and prides himself in his sin; the other, as he sinned bashfully, so he hates himself for sinning: the one grows up daily to a greater height of iniquity; the other improves his sin to the bettering of his soul. But this difference of sin, as it makes sin unmeasurably sinful in the worst men: so it doth not quite annul it in the holiest: it is their sin still, though it reign not in them, though it kill them not.

While, then, there cannot but be sin in the elect, is it possible, that God should not see it there? Is there any thing in heaven, or earth, or hell, that can be hid from his all-seeing eyes? where should this sin lurk, that he should not espy it? Do not the secrets of all hearts lie open before him? Are not *his eyes a flame of fire?* Rev. i. 14. Is it not expressly noted, as an aggravation of evil, *Judah did evil in the sight of the Lord?* 1 Kings xiv. 22: and, *Our transgressions*, saith Isaiah, *are multiplied before thee;* Isaiah

lix. 12. It is out of his infinite holiness, that he cannot abide to behold sin: but it is out of his absolute omniscience, that there is no sin which he beholds not; and out of his infinite justice, that he beholds no sin which he hates not. Is it, then, for that sin hath no being; as that, which is only a failing and privation of that rectitude and integrity which should be in us and our actions, without any positive entity in itself? Upon this ground, God should see no sin at all; no, not in the wickedest man upon earth: and, whereas wicked men do nothing but sin, it should follow, that God takes no notice of most of the actions that are done in the world; whereof the very thought were blasphemy.

Since, then, it cannot be out of defect of knowledge, that God sees not the sins of his elect, is it out of a favourable connivance, that he is willing not to see what he sees? Surely, if the meaning be, that God sees not the sins of the penitent with a revengeful eye, that out of a merciful indulgence he will not prosecute the sins whereof we have repented with due vengeance, but passes them by as if they had not been; we do so gladly yield to this truth, that we can never bless God enough for this wonderful mercy to poor sinners. It is his gracious word, which we lay ready hold upon, *I, even I, am he, that blotteth out thy transgressions for my own sake, and will not remember thy sins;* Isa. xliii. 25. But if the meaning be, that God bears with sin because theirs, that he so winks at it as that he neither sees nor detests it as it falls from so dear actors, it is no other than a blasphemous charge of injustice upon the Holy One of Israel: *Your iniquities*, saith Isaiah, speaking of God's chosen people, *have separated between you and your God; and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear;* Isa. lix. 2. Who was dearer to God, than the man after his own heart? yet, when he had given way to those foul sins of adultery and murder, Nathan tells him from God, *Now, therefore, the sword shall never depart from thy house, because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife. Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thy own house, &c;* 2 Sam. xii. 10, 11. How full and clear is that complaint of Moses, the man of God! *We are consumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath are we troubled. Thou hast set our iniquities before thee; our secret sins in the light of thy countenance;* Ps. xc. 7, 8. And Jeremiah, to the same purpose, *We have transgressed and have rebelled: thou hast not pardoned. Thou hast covered with anger, and persecuted us: thou hast slain; thou hast not pitied us. Thou hast covered thyself with a cloud, that our prayer should not pass through;* Lam. iii. 42, 43, 44.

Doubtless then, God so sees sin in his elect, that he both more notes and hates sin more in his dearest children, than in any other.

Upon this impious supposition of God's not seeing sin in his chosen, wouldest thou raise that hellish suggestion, That a man must see no sin in himself, no repentance for sin; than which, what wider gap can be opened to a licentious stupidity? For, that a man should commit sin, as Lot did his incest, not knowing that he doth the fact, what is it, but to bereave him of his senses? To

commit that fact which he may not know to be sin, what is it, but to bereave him of reason? Not to be sorry for the sin he hath committed, what is it, but to bereave him of grace? How contrary is this to the mind and practice of all God's Saints! Holy Job could say, *How many are mine iniquities and sins! make me to know my transgression and my sin:* Job xiii. 23: and, at last, when God had wrought accordingly upon his heart, *I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes;* Job xlii. 6. Penitent David could say, *I acknowledge my transgression, and my sin is ever before me;* Ps. li. 3: and, elsewhere, *I will declare mine iniquity, and be sorry for my sin;* Ps. xxxviii. 18: and Solomon's suppliant, that would hope for audience in heaven, must *know the plague of his own heart;* 1 Kings viii. 38.

Carry on, therefore, thy deluded clients in a willing ignorance of their sins, and a secure regardlessness of their repentance: for me, I will ransack my heart for my secret sins; and find no peace in my soul, till it be truly sensible of my own repentance and God's remission.

IVTH. TEMPTATION:

"*Thou mayest live as thou listest: thy destiny is irreversible. If thou be predestined to life, thy sins cannot damn thee; for God's election remaineth certain: if thou be ordained to damnation, all thy good endeavours cannot save thee. Please thyself on earth: thou canst not alter what is done in heaven:*" Repelled.

THE suggestion is pernicious; and such, as that Satan's quiver hath not many shafts more deadly: for, wherever it enters, it renders a man carelessly desperate, and utterly regardless either of good or evil; bereaving him, at once, both of grace and wit.

The story tells us of a great prince tainted with this poison, whom his wise physician happily cured: for, being called to the sick bed of him, whom he knew thus dangerously resolved, instead of medicine he administers to his patient this just conviction: "Sir, you are conscious of your stiff opinion concerning predestination: why do you send to me for the cure of your sickness? Either you are predestinated to recover and live; or else you are, in God's decree, appointed to die: if you be ordained to live and recover, you shall live, though you take no helps of physic from me; but if to die, all my art and means cannot save you." The convinced prince saw and felt his error, and recanted it; as well perceiving, how absurd and unreasonable it is, in whatsoever decree of either temporal or spiritual good, to sever the means from the end; being both equally determined, and the one in way to the other.

The comparison is clear and irrefragable: God's decree is equally both certain and secret, for bodily health and life eternal. The means appointed are food and medicine, for the one; and, for the other, repentance, faith, obedience: in the use of these, we may

live: we cannot but die, in their neglect. Were it any other than madness in me to rely upon a presupposed decree; willingly forbearing, the while, the means whereby it is brought about? To say, "If I shall live, I shall live though I eat not; if I shall die, though I eat I shall not live: therefore I will not eat; but cast myself upon God's providence, whether to live or die:" in doing thus, what am I other, than a self-murderer?

It is a prevailing policy of the Devil, so to work by his temptations upon the heart of man, that, in temporal things, he shall trust to the means, without regard to the providence of the God that gives them; in spiritual, he should cast himself upon the providence of a God, without respect to the means whereby they are effected: whereas, if both these go not together, we lose either God, or ourselves, or both.

It is true, that if God had peremptorily declared his absolute will concerning the state or event of any creature, we might not endeavour or hope to alter his decree. If God have said to a Moses, *Go up to the mount, and die there*, it is not for that obedient servant of God to say, "Yet I will lay up some years' provision, if perchance I may yet live."

Although even thus, in the minatory declarations of God's purpose, because we know not what conditions may be secretly intended, we may use what means we may for a diversion. The Ninevites heard that express word from Jonah, *Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be destroyed;* and, though they believed the Prophet, yet they betook themselves to an universal humiliation for the prevention of the judgment. David heard from the mouth of Nathan, *The child, that is born unto thee, shall surely die;* 2 Sam. xii. 14: yet he besought God, and fasted, and lay all night upon the earth, and could say, *Who can tell, whether God will be gracious to me, that the child may live?* v. 22. Good Hezekiah was sick unto death; and hears from Isaiah, *Set thy house in order, for thou shalt die, and not live;* 2 Kings xx. 1, 2: yet, *he turns his face to the wall, and prays;* and makes use of his bunch of figs, and recovers; v. 7.

But, where the counsel of God is altogether secret, without the least glimpse of revelation, for a man to pass a peremptory doom upon himself; and either, thereupon, wilfully to neglect the known means of his good, or to run willingly upon those courses which will necessarily work his destruction; it is the highest degree of madness, that can be incident into a reasonable creature.

The Father of Mercies hath appointed means of the salvation of mankind, which lie open to them, if they would not be wanting to themselves: but especially to us, who are within the bosom of his Church, he hath held forth saving helps in abundance. What warnings, what reproofs, what exhortations, what invitations, what entreaties, what importunities hath he forborne for our conversion! what menaces, what afflictions, what judgments, hath he not made use of for the prevention of our damnation! Can there be now any man so desperately mad, as to shut heaven gates against himself, which the merciful God leaves open for him? or, as to break

open the gates of hell,' and rush violently into the pit of destruction, which God had latched against him?

Thou sayest, "If I be predestined to life, my sins cannot damn me."

Man! thou beginnest at the wrong end; in that thou takest thy first rise at God's eternal counsels, and then judgest doubtfully of thine own ways. It is not for thee to begin first at heaven, and then to descend to earth: this course is presumptuous and damnable. What are those secret and closed books of God's eternal decree and preordination, unto thee? They are only for the eyes of him, that wrote them: *The Lord knoweth them, that are his.* Look, if thou wilt, upon the outer seal of those divine secrets; and, read, *Let every one, that nameth the name of Christ, depart from iniquity;* 2 Tim. ii. 19.

Thy way lies from earth to heaven. The revealed will of God, by which only we are to be regulated, is, "Repent, believe, obey; and thou shalt be saved: live and die in thy sins, impenitent, unbelieving; thou shalt be damned." According to this rule, frame thou thy courses and resolutions: and, if thou canst be so great an enemy to thine own soul, as determinately to contemn the means of salvation, and to tread wilfully in the paths of death, who can say other, but thou art fair for hell?

But, if thou shalt carefully use and improve those good means which God hath ordained for thy conversion, and shalt thereupon find that true grace is wrought in thy soul; that thou abhorrest all evil ways, that thou dost truly believe in the Lord Jesus, and heartily purposest and endeavourest to live holily and conscionably in this present world; thou mayest now as assuredly know thy name written in heaven, as if thou hadst read it in those eternal characters of God's secret council. Plainly, it is not for thee to say, "I am predestinate to life: therefore, thus I shall do, and thus I shall speed:" but, contrarily, "Thus hath God wrought in me: therefore, I am predestinate. Let me do well, it cannot but be well with me: *Glory, and honour, and peace to every man, that worketh good;* Rom. ii. 10. Let me do my utmost diligence to *make my calling and election sure;* 2 Pet. i. 10: I am safe, and shall be happy."

But, if thou hast been miscarried to lewd courses, and hast lived as without God in the world; while thou dost so, thy case is fearful: but who allowed thee to sit judge upon thine own soul; and to pass a peremptory doom of necessary damnation upon thyself? Are not the means of grace, God's blessed ordinances, still held forth unto thee? Doth not God still graciously invite thee to repentance? Doth not thy Saviour stand ready, with his arms spread abroad, to receive thee into his bosom? And canst thou be so desperately and presumptuously merciless to thyself, as to say, "I shall be damned: therefore, I will sin?" Thou canst not be so wicked, but there may be a possibility of thy reclamation. While God gives thee respite, there may be hope. Be not thou so injurious to thyself, as to usurp the office both of God and the Devil:

of God, in passing a final judgment upon thyself; of the Devil, in drawing thyself into damnation. Return, therefore, O sinner, and live: break off thy sins by repentance, and be saved. But, if otherwise, know, that God's decree doth neither necessitate thy sin, nor thy damnation: thou mayest thank thyself for both: *Thy perdition is of thyself, O Israel;* Hos. xiii. 9.

VTH. TEMPTATION:

"*Why wilt thou be singular amongst and above thy neighbours: to draw needless censures upon thyself? Be wise; and do as the most. Be not so over-squeamish, as not to dispense with thy conscience in some small matters. Lend a lie to a friend: swallow an oath, for fear: be drunk, sometimes, for good-fellowship: falsify thy word, for an advantage: serve the time: frame thyself to all companies. Thus thou shalt be both warm and safe, and kindly respected:*" Repelled.

PLAUSIBLE Tempter, what care wouldest thou seem to take of my ease and reputation, that, in the mean time, thou mightest run away with my soul!

Thou persuadest me not to be singular amongst my neighbours.—It shall not be my fault, if I be so. If my neighbours be good and virtuous, I am with and for them; let me be hissed at, to go alone: but if otherwise, let me rather go upright alone, than halt with company.

Thou tellest me of censures.—They are spent in vain, that would dishearten me from good, or draw me into evil. I am too deep rooted in my resolutions of good, than to be turned up by every slight wind. I know who it is, that hath said, *Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my Name's sake;* Matt. v. 11. Let men take leave to talk their pleasure; in what I know I do well, I am censure-proof.

Thou biddest me be wise, and do as the most.—These two cannot agree together. Not to follow the most, but the best, is true wisdom. My Saviour hath told me, that *many go in the broad way, which leadeth to destruction;* Matt. vii. 13: and it is the charge of God, *Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil;* Exod. xxiii. 2. While I follow the guidance of my God, I walk confidently; as knowing, I cannot go amiss: as for others, let them look to their own feet; they shall be no guides of mine.

Thou biddest me dispense with my conscience in small matters.—I have learnt to call nothing small, that may offend the Majesty of the God of Heaven. Dispensations must only proceed from a greater power: only God is greater than my conscience: where he dispenseth not, it were a vain presumption for me to dispense with myself.

And what are those small matters, wherein thou solicitest my dispensation?

To lend a lie to a friend?—Why dost thou not persuade me to lend him my soul? yea, to give it unto thee for him? It is a sure word of the Wise Man, "The mouth, that lieth, slayeth the soul;" Wisd. i. 11. How vehement a charge hath the God of Truth laid upon me, to avoid this sin, which thou, the Father of Lies, wouldest draw me unto! Lev. xix. 11. What marvel is it, if each speak for his own? He, who is *Truth* itself, and *loveth truth in the inward parts;* John xiv. 6. Ps. li. 6. justly calls for it in the tongue: *Laying aside lying*, saith the Spirit of God, *speak every man truth with his neighbour;* Col. iii. 9. Eph. iv. 25. Thou, who art a lying spirit, wouldest be willing to advance thine own brood, under the fair pretence of friendship. But what? shall I, to gratify a friend, make God mine enemy? shall I, to rescue a friend from danger, bring destruction upon myself? *Thou shalt destroy them, that speak leasings*, saith the Psalmist; Ps. v. 6. *Without, shall be every one, that loveth or maketh lies;* Rev. xxii. 15. If, therefore, my true attestation may avail my friend, my tongue is his: but, if he must be supported by falsehood, my tongue is neither his, nor mine; but is his, that made it.

To swallow an oath for fear?—No, Tempter. I can let down no such morsels: an oath is too sacred, and too awful a thing, for me to put over, out of any outward respects against my conscience. If I swear, the oath is not mine: it is God's; and the revenge will be his, whose the offence is; Exod. xxii. 11. Ezek. xvi. 59. It is a charge to be trembled at; *Ye shall not swear by my Name falsely: neither shalt thou profane the Name of thy God: I am the Lord;* Lev. xix. 12. And, if the word of charge be so dreadful, what terror shall we find in the word of judgment! Lo, God swears too; and, because there is no greater to swear by, he swears by himself: *As I live, surely mine oath that he hath despised, and my covenant which he hath broken, even it will I recompense upon his own head;* Ezek. xvii. 19. It was one of the words, that were delivered in fire, and smoak, and thunder and lightning, in Sinai; *The Lord will not hold him guiltless, that taketh his name in vain;* Exod. xx. 7. I dare not, therefore, fear any thing so much, as the displeasure of the Almighty; and (to die for) will neither take an unlawful oath, nor violate a just one.

As for that sociable excess, whereto thou temptest me, however the commonness of the vice may have seemed to abate of the reputation of heinousness, in the opinion of others; yet, to me, it representeth it so much more hateful: as an universal contagion is more grievous, than a local. I cannot purchase the name of good-fellowship, with the loss of my reason, or with the price of a curse. Daily experience makes good that word of Solomon, that *Wine is a mocker;* Prov. xx. 1: robbing a man of himself, and leaving a beast in his room. And what woes do I hear denounced against those, that *rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong*

drink; that continue till night, till the wine inflame them! Isa. v. 11. If any man think he may pride himself in a strong brain and a vigorous body; *Woe to them, that are mighty to drink wine; and men of strength, to mingle strong drinks;* v. 22. Let the jovialists of the world *drink wine in bowls,* (Amos vi. 6.) and feast themselves without fear: let me never join myself with that fellowship, where God is banished from the company.

Wouldest thou persuade me to falsify my word for an advantage? what advantage can be so great, as the conscience of truth and fidelity? That man is for God's tabernacle, *that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not;* Ps. xv. 4. Let me rather lose by honesty, than gain by falsehood and perfidiousness.

Thou biddest me serve the time:—So I will do, while the time serves not thee: but, if thou shalt have so corrupted the time, that *the whole world is set in wickedness,* (1 John v. 19.) I will serve my God in opposing it. Gladly will I serve the time, in all good offices, that may tend to rectify it; but, to serve it in a way of flattery, I hate and scorn.

I shall willingly frame myself to all companies: not for a partnership in their vice; but for their reclamation from evil, or encouragement in good. The Chosen Vessel hath, by his example, taught me this charitable and holy pliableness: *Though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself a servant unto all; that I might gain the more. To the Jews, I became as a Jew; that I might gain the Jews: to them, that are under the Law, as under the Law; that I might gain them, that are under the Law: To them, that are without Law, as without Law, being not without Law to God, but under the Law to Christ; that I might gain them, that are without Law. To the weak, I became weak; that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men; that I might, by all means, save some;* 1 Cor. ix. 19—22. My only scope shall be spiritual gain: for this will I, like some good merchant, traffic with all nations, with all persons. But, for carnal respects, to put myself, like the first matter, into all forms; to be demure with the strictly-severe, to be debauched with the drunkard, with the atheist profane, with the bigot superstitious; what were this, but to give away my soul to every one, save to the God that owns it; and, while I would be all, to be nothing; and to profess an affront to him, that hath charged me, *Be not conformed to this world?* Rom. xii. 2.

Shortly, let me be despicable, and starve, and perish in my innocent integrity, rather than be warm and safe, and honoured upon so evil conditions.

VIth. TEMPTATION:

"*It is but for a while, that thou hast to live; and, when thou art gone, all the world is gone with thee: Improve thy life to the best contentment: Take thy pleasure, while thou mayest:*" Repelled.

EVEN this was the very note of thine old Epicurean clients: *Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we shall die;* 1 Cor. xv. 32. I acknowledge the same dart, and the same hand that flings it: a dart, dipped in that deadly poison, that causeth the man to die laughing: a dart, that pierceth as deeply into the sensual heart, as it is easily retorted by the regenerate.

These wild inferences of sensuality are for those, that know no heaven, no hell: but, to me, that know this world to be nothing but a thoroughfare to eternity either way, they abhor, not from grace only, but from reason itself. In the intuition of this immortality, what wise man would not rather say, "My life is short: therefore, it must be holy? I shall not live long: let me live well. So let me live for a while, that I may live for ever?"

These have been still the thoughts of gracious hearts. Moses, the man of God, after he hath computed the short periods of our age, and confined it to fourscore years, (so *soon is it cut off, and we fly away*) infers, with the same breath, *So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts to wisdom;* Ps. xc. 10, 12: as implying, that this holy arithmetic should be an introduction to Divinity; that the search of heavenly wisdom should be the true use of our short life. And the Sweet Singer of Israel, after he hath said, *Behold, thou hast made my days as a span long: mine age is nothing to thee;* finds cause to look up from earth to heaven: *And now, Lord, what wait I for? surely my hope is even in thee:* Ps. xxxix. 5, 7. He, that desired to know the measure of his life, finds it but a span; and recompenses the shortness of his continuance, with hopes everlasting. As the tender mercy of our God pities our frailty, remembering that we are but *flesh, a wind that passeth away, and cometh not again;* Ps. lxxviii. 39: so our frailty supports itself with the meditation of his blessed eternity; *My days*, saith the Psalmist, *are like a shadow, that declineth, and I am withered like grass: But thou, O Lord, shalt endure for ever, and thy remembrance to all generations;* Ps. cii. 11, 12.

As, therefore, every man walketh in a vain shadow, in respect of his transitoriness; so the good man, in respect of his holy conversation, can say, *I will walk before the Lord, in the land of the living;* Ps. cxvi. 9: and knows himself made for better ends, than vain pleasure: *I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord;* Ps. cxviii. 17. It is for them, *who have their portion in this life*, who have made their belly their God, and the world their heaven,

Ps. xvii. 14. to place their felicity in these carnal delights: God's secret ones enjoy their higher contentments: *Thy loving-kindness is better than life*, saith the Prophet; Ps. lxiii. 3. *Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than* (they had) *in the time that their corn and their wine encreased;* Ps. iv. 7.

Miserable worldlings, who *walk in the vanity of their minds; Being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their hearts: Who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness;* Eph. iv. 17, 18, 19. What wonder is it, if, as their life is merely brutish, so the happiness that they affect is no other than bestial? and if they snatch at those vanishing shadows of pleasure, which a poor momentary life can afford them?

According to the improvement of our best faculties, so is our felicity. The best faculty of brute creatures is their sense: they, therefore, seek their happiness, in the delectation of their senses. Man's best faculty is reason: he places his happiness, therefore, in the delights of the mind; in the perfection of knowledge, and height of speculation. The Christian's best faculty is faith: his felicity, therefore, consists in those things, which are not perceptible by sense; not fathomable by reason, but apprehensible by his *faith*, which *is the evidence of things not seen* (Heb. xi. 1.) either by the eye of sense or reason.

And, as his felicity, so is his life, spiritual: *To me to live is Christ*, saith he, that was rapt into the third heaven; Phil. i. 21. *I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me;* Gal. ii. 20. *Our life is hid with Christ in God;* and, *when Christ, which is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory;* Col. iii. 3, 4.

Lo, then, when the worldling dies, his life dies with him; and, to him, the world is gone, with both: but, when I die to nature, I have a life, that lives still; a life, that cannot die; a life, that both is and makes me glorious.

It is not for me, therefore, to hunt after these unsatisfying and momentary pleasures, which perish in their use, and shut up in repentance: but to lay up those sure comforts, which shall never have an end; but, after this transitory life, shall accompany me to eternity.

Tell not me, therefore, of taking my full scope to the pleasures of sin. I know there is a hell; and I look for a heaven. Upon this short moment of my life, depends everlastingness.

Let me, therefore, be careful so to bestow this short life, as that I may be sure to avoid eternity of torments, and to lay up for eternity of blessedness.

VIIth. TEMPTATION:

"*It is for common wits, to walk in the plain road of opinions. If thou wouldest be eminent amongst men, leave the beaten track, and tread in new paths of thine own: neither let it content thee to guide thy steps by the dim lanterns of the Ancient: he is nobody, that hath not new lights, either to hold out or follow:*"
Repelled.

WICKED Tempter! I know thou wouldest have me go any ways, save good. Were those new ways right, thou wouldest never persuade me to walk in them. Now, I have just reason to misdoubt and shun those paths, which thou invitest me unto; both as private, and as new.

It is enough, that they are my own: for, canst thou think to bring me to believe myself wiser than the whole Church of God? Who am I, that I should over-know, not the present world of men only, but the eminent Saints and learned Doctors of all former ages? Why should I not rather suspect my own judgment, than oppose theirs? When the Church, in that heavenly marriage-song, enquires of the Great Shepherd of our Souls; *Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flocks to rest at noon; for why should I be as one, that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions?* Cant. i. 7: she receives answer; *If thou know not, O thou fairest among women, go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beside the shepherds' tents;* v. 8. Lo, the tracks of the flock and the tents of the shepherds are my direction to find my Saviour: if I turn aside, I miss him, and lose myself.

It is more than enough, that those ways are new; for truth is eternal; and that is, therefore, most true that comes nearest to eternity: as, contrarily, novelty is a brand of falsehood and error: *Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see; and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls;* Jer. vi. 16. Far be it from me then, that I should be guilty of that contempt, whereof the Prophet, with the same breath, accuseth his Jews: *But they said, We will not walk therein.* It is a fearful word, that I hear from the mouth of the same Prophet; *Because my people have forgotten me, and have caused them to stumble in their ways from the ancient paths, in a way not cast up, I will scatter them, as with an east-wind, before the enemy: I will shew them the back, and not the face, in the day of their calamity;* Jer. xviii. 15, 17.

Woe is me, for these heavy times! wherein it is not the least part of our sin, nor the least cause of our miseries, that we have stumbled from the ancient paths, into the untrodden ways of schism and error; and find not the face, but the back of our God turned

to us, in this day of our calamity. O God, thou art just: we cannot complain, that have made ourselves miserable.

It is true, where our forefathers have manifestly started aside like a broken bow, and having *corrupted their ways*, Gen. vi. 12. *have burnt incense to vanity*, Jer. xviii. 15. we must be so far from making their precedent a warrant for our imitation, as that we hear God say to us. *Be ye not like unto your fathers*; 2 Chron. xxx. 7: *Walk not in the statutes of your forefathers, neither observe their judgments*; Ezek. xx. 18: *For those, that turn aside to crooked ways, the Lord shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity*; Ps. cxxv. 5. But, where we see them *walk with a right foot*, Gal. ii. 14. in the holy ways of God, and continue stedfastly *in the faith which was once delivered to the saints*, Jude 3. we have reason to be *followers of them, who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises*; Heb. vi. 12: that, walking in their ways, we may attain to their end, the salvation of our souls.

Let me see those steps, wherein the holy Prophets have trod; those, wherein the blessed Apostles have traced the prophets; those, wherein the Primitive Fathers and Martyrs have followed the apostles; those, wherein the godly and learned Doctors of the succeeding ages have followed those primitive fathers: and, if I follow not them, let me wander and perish. It is for true men, to walk in the king's highway: thieves and suspected persons cross over, through by-paths: and make way, where they find none.

Thou tellest me of new lights:—I ask whence they rise. I know who it was, that said, *I am the light of the world: he, that followeth me, shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life*; John viii. 12: xii. 46. and I know *that light was the true light*, (John i. 8, 9.) of whom holy David spake long before, *Thou art my lamp, O Lord: and the Lord will lighten my darkness*; 2 Sam. xxii. 29: *and in thy light shall we see light*; Ps. xxxvi. 9. Those, that do truly hold forth this light, shall be my guides; and I shall follow them with all confidence; and shall find *the path of the just, as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day*; Prov. iv. 18. As for any new light, that should now break forth *and shine upon our ways*; Job xxii. 28: certainly, it is but *darkness*; Luke xi. 35: such a light, as Bildad prophesied of, long ago; *The light of the wicked shall be put out, and the spark of his fire shall not shine: The light shall be darkness in his tabernacle; and his candle shall be put out with him*; Job xviii. 5, 6: so as the seduced followers of these new lights may have just cause to take up that complaint of the Prophet, *We wait for light, but behold obscurity; for brightness, but we walk in darkness: We grope for the wall, like the blind: we stumble, at noon day, as in the night*; Is. lix. 9, 10. Shortly, then, that light, which the Father of Lights hath held forth in his will revealed in his word, as it hath been interpreted by his holy Church in all ages, shall be my guide, till I shall see as I am seen: as for any other lights, they are but as those wandering fires, that appear in damp marshes, which lead the traveller into a ditch.

VIIIth. TEMPTATION:

"*Pretend religion, and do any thing: what face is so foul, as that mask will not cleanly cover? Seem holy, and be what thou wilt:*"
Repelled.

YEA, there thou wouldest have me. This is that deadly dart, wherewith thou hast slain millions of souls. Hence it is, that the Mahometan Saints may commit public filthiness, with thanks: hence, that corrupt Christians bury such abominable crimes in their cowls: hence, that false professors shroud so much villainy under the shelter of piety: hence, that the world abounds with so many sheep without, wolves within; Matt. vii. 15; fair tombs, full of inward rottenness; Matt. xxiii. 27; filthy dunghills, covered over with snow; rich hearse-clothes, hiding ill-scented carcasses; broken *potsherds, covered with silver dross;* Prov. xxvi. 23: hence, that the adversaries of Judah offer to Zerubbabel their aid in building the Temple; Ezra iv. 2; the harlot hath her peace-offerings; Prov. vii. 14; Absalom hath his vow to pay; 2 Sam. xv. 7, 8; Herod will worship the infant; Matt. ii. 8; Judas hath a kiss for his Master; Matt. xxvi. 49; Simon Magus will be a convert; Acts viii. 13; Ananias and Sapphira will part with all; Acts v. 1, 2; the Angel of the Church of Sardis will pretend to live; Rev. iii. 1; the beast hath horns like a lamb, but speaks like a dragon; Rev. xiii. 11; in a word, the wickedest of men will counterfeit Saints, and false saints are very Devils.

For, so much more eminent as the virtue is which they would seem to put on, so much the more odious is the simulation both to God and man: now the most eminent of all virtues is holiness, whereby we both come nearest unto God, and most resemble him; 1 Pet. i. 16. Lev. xi. 44. xix. 2.

Of all creatures, therefore, out of hell, there is none so loathsome to God as the hypocrites: and that, upon a double provocation; both for doing of evil, and for doing evil under a colour of good. The face, that the wicked man sets upon his sin, is worse than the sin itself: *Bring no more vain oblations*, saith the Lord: *incense is an abomination to me: the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with: it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble to me; I am weary to bear them;* Isa. i. 13, 14.

How fain wouldest thou, therefore, draw me into a double condemnation, both for being evil and seeming good: both which are an abomination to the Lord! Do I not hear him say, *Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me: Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work amongst this people, even a marvellous work and a wonder; for the*

wisdom of the wise shall perish? Isa. xxix. 13, 14. Do I not hear him say, by his Prophet Jeremiah, *They will deceive every one his neighbour; and will not speak the truth. Their tongue is an arrow shot out: it speaketh deceit: one speaketh peaceably to his neighbour, with his mouth; but, in heart, he layeth his wait. Shall I not visit them for these things, saith the Lord? shall not my soul be avenged of such a nation as this?* Jer. ix. 5, 8, 9.

Indeed, this is the way to beguile the eyes of men like ourselves: for who would mistrust a mortified face? an eye and hand lifted up to heaven? a tongue, that speaks holy things? But, when we have to do with a Searcher of Hearts, what madness is it to think there can be any wisdom, or understanding, or counsel against the Lord! *Woe be to them, therefore, that seek deep to hide their counsel from the Lord: and their works are in the dark; and they say, Who seeth us? and who knoweth us?* Isa. xxix. 15. *Woe be to the rebellious children, saith the Lord, that take counsel, but not of me; that cover with a covering, but not of my Spirit: that they may add sin to sin;* ch. xxx. 1.

Shall I then *cleanse the outside of the cup*, while I am *within full of extortion and excess?* Matt. xxiii. 25. Shall I *fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness?* Isa. lviii. 4. Shall I, *under pretence of long prayers, devour widows' houses?* Matt. xxiii. 14. Shall I put on thy form, and *transfigure* myself *into an angel of light?* 2 Cor. xi. 14. Shall not the all-seeing eye of the Righteous God find me out, in my damnable simulation? Hath not he said, and will make it good, *Though thou wash thee with nitre, and take thee much soap; yet thine iniquity is marked before me?* Jer. ii. 22. Hath not my Saviour, who shall be our Judge, said, *Therefore thou shalt receive the greater damnation?* Matt. xxiii. 14. Can there be any heavier doom, that can fall from that awful mouth, than, "Receive thy portion with hypocrites?"

Let those, therefore, that are ambitious of a higher room in hell, maintain *a form of godliness*, and *deny the power of it;* 2 Tim. iii. 5: face wickedness, with piety: stalk under religion, for the aims of policy: juggle with God and the world: ease a devil with a saint; and row towards hell, while they look heaven-ward.

For me, *All the while my breath is in me, and the spirit which God gives me is in my nostrils, I shall walk in mine uprightness;* Job xxvii. 3. *All false ways*, and false semblances, *shall my soul utterly abhor;* Ps. xxvi. 11. that so, at the parting, my *rejoicing may be the testimony of* my *conscience, that, in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, I have had* my *conversation in the world;* 2 Cor. i. 12.

IXth. TEMPTATION:

"*Why shouldst thou lose any thing of thy height? Thou art not made of common mould: neither art thou as others. If thou knowest thyself, thou art more holy, more wise, better gifted, more enlightened than thy neighbours. Justly, therefore, mayest thou overlook the vulgar of Christians, with pity, contempt, censure; and bear thyself as too good for ordinary conversation, go apart, and avoid the contagion of common breath:*" Repelled.

If pride were thy ruin, Wicked Spirit, how fain wouldest thou make it mine also! This was thy first killing suggestion to our first parents in paradise, soon after thine own fall, as if it had been lately before thy own case, *Ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil*; Gen. iii. 5. That, which thou foundest so deadly to thyself, thou art enviously willing to feoff upon man; that if, through thy temptation, pride may *compass him about as a chain*, (Ps. lxxiii. 6.) he may bear thee company in those everlasting chains, wherein thou art *reserved under darkness, to the judgment of the Great Day*; Jude 6.

Thou well knowest, that the ready way to make me odious unto God, is, to make me proud of myself. *Pride and arrogancy, and the evil way, doth he hate*; Prov. viii. 13. *The day of the Lord of Hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty*, saith the Prophet; Isa. ii. 12. *He hath scattered the proud in the imaginations of their hearts*, saith the Blessed Virgin; Luke i. 51. *God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble*, saith the Apostle; James iv. 6. 1 Pet. v. 5. *The Lord will destroy the house of the proud*, saith Solomon; Prov. xv. 25: and his father David, before him, *Thine eyes are upon the haughty, that thou mayest bring them down*; 2 Sam. xxii. 28: down, indeed; even to the bottom of that pit of perdition. Make me but proud therefore, and I am thine: sure I am, God will not own me; and, if I could be in heaven with this sin, would cast me down headlong into hell; Isaiah xiv. 12.

Thou biddest me not to lose any thing of my height:—Alas, poor wretched dwarf that I am! what height have I? If I have but grace enough, to know and bewail my own misery and nothingness, it is the great mercy of my God. *Who maketh* me *to differ from another? and what have* I, *that* I *have not received? and if* I *have received it, why should* I *glory in it as* my own? 1 Cor. iv. 7. Whatsoever thou persuadest me, let me rather lose of my height, than add to my stature, and affect too high a pitch. That humility is rewarded with honour; this pride, with ruin. It is the word of truth himself, *Whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he, that shall humble himself, shall be exalted*; Mat. xxiii. 12. Luke xiv. 11. xviii. 14. The way then, to lose my whole height, yea my be-

ing, is, to be lifted up, in and above myself: for, though I should build my nest as high as the eagle, or advance a throne amongst the stars: yet, how soon shall he cast me down into the dust; yea, without my repentance, into the nethermost hell!

Thou tellest me, that, which the Pharisee said of himself, *I am not as others:* true: for I can say, with the Chosen Vessel, that *I am the chief of sinners.*

Thou wouldest bring me into an opinion, that I am more holy and more wise than my neighbours:—I am a stranger to other men's graces: I am acquainted with my own wants: yea, I so well know my own sinfulness and folly, that I hang down my head in a just shame for both. I know that he, who was holier than I, could say, *I know that in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing;* Rom. vii. 18: and he, that was wiser than I, could say, *Surely, I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man: I neither learned wisdom, nor have the knowledge of the Holy;* Prov. xxx. 2, 3. All the holiness that I have attained unto, is, to see and lament my defects of holiness; and all my wisdom, is, to descry and complain of my own ignorance and foolishness.

Am I better gifted than another?—Thou art an ill judge of either, who enviest the gifts of both. But, if I be so, they are gifts still: and such gifts, as the donor hath not absolutely given away from himself to me; but hath given, or lent them rather, to me, for an improvement to his own use: which I have no more reason to be proud of, than the honest factor of his master's stock; received by him, not for possession, but for traffic.

Am I more enlightened than others?—The more do I discern my own darkness; and the more do I find cause to be humbled under the sense of it. But, if the greater light, which thou sayest is in me, were not of a human imagination, but of divine irradiation, what more reason should I have to be proud of it, than that, in this more temperate clime, I have more sunshine than those of Lapland and Finland, and the rest of those more northern nations? So much the more reason have I to be thankful: none, to be proud.

Why should I, therefore, overlook the meanest of my fellow-Christians: who may, perhaps, have more interest in God than myself? for it is not our knowledge that so much endears us to God, as our affections. Perhaps, he, that knows less, may love more; and, if he had been blessed with my means, would have known more. Neither is it the distribution of the talents, that argues favour; but the grace to employ them to the benefit of the Giver: if he, that received the one talent, had gained another, he had received more thanks, than he, that, upon the receipt of five talents, had gained one. The Spirit breathes where it listeth: and there may lie secret graces in the bosom of those, who pass for common Christians, that may find greater acceptation in heaven, than those, whose profession makes a fairer ostentation of holiness.

I can pity, therefore, those, that are ignorant, and apparently

graceless: but, for those, that profess both to know and love Christ, while their lives deny not the power of godliness, I dare not spend upon them either my contempt or censure; lest, while I judge wrongfully, I be justly judged: much less dare I separate myself from their communion, as contagious.

Thou knowest how little it were to thine advantage, that I should be persuaded to depart from the tents of the notoriously wicked; and to *have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness:* Numb. xvi. 20, 21. 2 Cor. vi. 17. Eph. v. 11.: as too well understanding, that *evil conversation corrupts good manners;* 1 Cor. xv. 33. and that a participation in sin draws on a partnership in judgment; Num. xvi. 26.

Neither know I, whether thou shouldest gain more by my joining with evil society, or my separating from good: infection follows upon the one; distraction, upon the other.

Those, then, which cast off their communion with Christ and his Church, whether in doctrine or practice, I shall avoid, as the plague, soon and far: but those, who truly profess a real conjunction with that Head and this body, into their secret let my soul come, and unto their assembly let mine honour be united. But if, where I find weakness of grace and involuntary failings of obedience, I shall say, *Stand by thyself, come not near me, for I am holier than thou,* Isa. lxv. 5. how can I make other account, than that this pride shall be a smoke in the nostrils of the Almighty; a fire, that burneth all day? and that he will recompense it into my bosom?

Shortly, I know none so fit to depart from, as from myself; my own pride, self-love, and the rest of my inbred corruptions: and am so far from overlooking others, that I know none worse than myself.

XTII. TEMPTATION:

"*However the zeal of your scrupulous preachers is wont to make the worst of every thing, and to damn the least slip to no less than hell; yet there are certain favourable temperaments of circumstances, which may, (if not excuse, yet) extenuate a fault: such as age, complexion, custom, profit, importunity, necessity; which are justly pleadable at the bar both of God and the conscience, and are sufficient to rebate the edge of divine severity:*"
Repelled.

WICKED Tempter! I know there is nothing upon earth, that so much either troubles thee, or impairs thy kingdom of darkness, as the zeal of conscionable preachers; those, who *lift up their voice like a trumpet, and shew* God's *people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sin;* Is. lviii. 1. This is it, that [illegible] millions of souls from the hand of hell, and gives them [illegible]

in thy spiritual assaults. This godly and aithful zeal represents men's sins to them as they are; and, by sins, the danger of their damnation; which thy malicious subtlety would fain blanch over, and palliate to their destruction. But, when thou hast all done, it is not in their power to make sin worse than it is, or in thine to make it better.

As for those favourable temperaments which thou mentionest, they are mere pandarisms of wickedness; fair visors of deformity.

For, to cast a glance upon each of them:—

Age is not a more common plea, than unjust. The young man pretends it for his wanton and inordinate lust; the old, for his grippleness, techiness, loquacity: all wrongfully, and not without foul abuse. Youth is taught by thee to call for a swing: and to make vigour and heat of blood a privilege for a wild licentiousness; for which it can have no claim, but from a charter sealed in hell: I am sure that God, who gives this marrow to his bones, and brawn to his arms, and strength to his sinews, and vivacity to his spirits, looks for another improvement: *Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth*, saith Solomon; Eccl. xii. 1: and his father, before him, *Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto, according to thy word;* Ps. cxix. 9: lo, the young man's ways are foul with lusts and distempered passions, and they must be cleansed; and the way to cleanse them is attendance (not of his own vain pleasures, but) of the holy ordinances of his Maker: thou wouldest have him run loose, like the wild ass in the desert: God tells him, *It is good for a man, to bear the yoke in his youth;* Lam. iii. 17: even the yoke of the divine precepts, the stooping whereunto is the best and truest of all freedoms: so as he may be able to say, with the best courtier * of the wickedest king, *I, thy servant, fear the Lord from my youth:* the aberrations from which holy laws of God are so far from finding an excuse from the prime of our years, as that holy Job cries out of them, in the bitterness of his soul, *Thou hast made me to possess the iniquities of my youth;* Job xiii. 26: and, as David vehemently deprecates God's anger for them, *Remember not, Lord, the sins of my youth;* Ps. xxv. 7. so, Zophar, the Naamathite, notes it for an especial brand of God's judgment upon the wicked man, that *his bones are full of the sins of his youth;* Job xx. 11: and God declares it as an especial mercy to his people, *Thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth;* Isa. liv. 4: the more headstrong, therefore, my youth is, the more strait shall I curb it, and hold it in; and, the more vigorous it is, so much the fitter it is to be consecrated to that God, who is most worthy to be served with the best of his own. As for Old Age, it hath, I grant, its humours and infirmities; but rather for our humiliation, than for our excuse: it is not more common than absurd and unreasonable, that, when we are necessarily leaving the world, we should be most fond in holding it; when we are ceasing

* Obadiah in 1 Kings xviii. 12.

to have any use of riches, then to endeavour most eagerly to get them; when we should be laying up treasure in heaven, to be treasuring up wrath for ourselves, and bags for we know not whom; to be unwilling to spend what we cannot keep, and to be mad on getting what we have not the wit or grace to spend: if, then, thou canst persuade any man to be so graceless, as to make his vicious disposition an apology for wickedness, let him plead the faults of his age for the excuse of his avarice: as for morosity of nature and garrulity of tongue, they are not the imperfections of the age, but of the persons: there are meek spirits, under grey hairs and wrinkled skins: there are old men, who, as that wise heathen said of old, can keep silence, even at a feast: he hath ill spent his age, that hath not attained to so good a hand over himself, as, in some meet measure, to moderate both his speech and passion.

If some Complexions both incline us more, and crave indulgence to some sins more than other, (the sanguine to lust, the choleric to rage, &c.) wherefore serves grace, but to correct them? If we must be overruled by nature, what do we professing Christianity? Neither humours nor stars can necessitate us to evil. Whilst thou, therefore, pretendest my natural constitution, I tell thee of my spiritual regeneration; the power whereof, if it have not mortified my evil and corrupt affections, I am not, what I profess to be, a Christian.

The strongest plea for the mitigation of sin, is, Custom; the power whereof is wont to be esteemed so great, as that it hath seemed to alter the quality of the fact; and, of sin, to make no sin. Hence the holy Patriarchs admitted many consorts into their marriage-bed, without the conscience of offending; which, if it had not been for the mediation of custom, had been justly esteemed no better than criminous. But, however where is no contrary injunction, custom may so far usurp, as to take upon it to be no less than a law itself; yet, where there is a just regulation of law, the plea of custom is so quite out of countenance, as that it is strongly retorted against itself: neither is there any more powerful reason for the abolition of an ill use, than that it is a custom; so much the more need, therefore, to be opposed and reformed. Hence was that vehement charge of God to his Israel, *After the doings of the land of Egypt, wherein ye dwell, shall ye not do; and, after the doings of the land of Canaan, whither I bring you, shall ye not do: neither shall ye walk after their ordinances;* Lev. xviii. 3. *Ye shall keep mine ordinance, that ye commit not any of these abominable customs, which were committed before you; and that ye defile not yourselves therein: I am the Lord your God;* v. 30. It is too true, that the bonds of custom are so strong and close, that they are not easily loosed; insomuch as custom puts on the face of another nature: *Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil;* Jer. xiii. 23. How stiffly did the men of Judah, after all the dreadful

threatenings of the Prophet, hold to their idolatrous customs, which they had learnt in Egypt! *We will burn incense to the queen of Heaven, and pour out drink-offerings to her, as we have done; we, and our fathers, our kings, and our princes, in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem;* Jer. xliv. 17. It is with ill customs, as with diseases; which, if they grow inveterate, are so much the harder to be cured: but, shall I therefore hug my malady, because I have long had it? because it will not part away with ease? Shall I bid a thief welcome, because he had wont to rob me? Shortly, then, so far is an ill custom from extenuating my sin, as that it aggravates it: neither shall I offend the less, because I offend with more; but rather double it, both, as in my act, and, as in my imitation; in following others amiss, and in helping to make up an ill precedent for others following of me.

As for the Profit that may accrue by sinning, let those carnal hearts value it, that have made the world their God: to me, the greatest gain, this way, is loss. Might I have that *house-full of gold and silver*, that Balaam talked of; Num. xxiv. 13: or *all* those *kingdoms of the earth, and the glory of them*, which thou shewedst to my Saviour; what are all these to the price of a sin, when they meet with a man that hath learnt from the mouth of Christ, *What profit shall it be to a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?* Matt. xvi. 26. Mark viii. 36.

Importunity is wont to be a prevalent suitor. How many have been dragged to hell by the force of others' solicitations, who, never else, meant to have trod in those paths of death! What marvel is it, if that which moved the unjust judge to do right, against the bent of his will, be able to draw the weak sinner awry? But if, in these earthly angariations, one mile, according to our Saviour's counsel, may bring on another; Matt. v. 41: yet, in spiritual evil ways, no compulsion can prevail upon a resolved spirit. It is not the change of stations, nor the building of twice seven altars, nor the sacrificing of seven bullocks and seven rams, that can win a true prophet of God to curse Israel; Num. xxiii. 4, 29. The Christian heart is fixed upon sure grounds of his own, never to be removed. If, therefore, his father sue to him: if his mother weep, and wring, and kneel, and beseech him, by the womb that bore him and the breasts that gave him suck; if his crying children cling about his knees, and crave his yieldance to some advantageous evil, or his declining some bitter sufferings for the cause of Christ; he can shake them off, with a holy neglect, and say, *What do you weeping and breaking my heart? for I am ready, not to be bound only, but also to die for the Name of the Lord Jesus;* Acts xxi. 13. *None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I may finish my course with joy;* Acts xx. 24. And, if any soul be so weak as to be led rather by the earnest motions of others than by his own settled determination, he shall find no other case before the tribunal of heaven, than our first parents did in shifting the guilt of their sin, the man to the

woman, the woman to the serpent. In the mean while, that word shall ever stand with me inviolable, *My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not;* Prov. i. 10.

Lastly, what can be the Necessity, which may either induce to sin, or excuse for sinning? What can the world do, to make me say I must do evil? Loss, restraint, exile, pain, death are the worst, that either malice can do, or patience suffer. These may put me hard to the question: but, when all is done, they must leave me free, either to act or endure. I need not, therefore, sin; since there is a remedy against sin,—suffering.

It is true, that we are in the hands of a most gracious and indulgent God, who considers what we are made of, pities our infirmities; and knows to put a difference, betwixt wilful rebellion and weak revolt. His mercy can distinguish of offenders; but his justice hath said, *Without shall be the fearful.* Finally, then, howsoever these circumstantial temperaments may receive pardon, after the fact, for the penitent, at the mercy-seat of heaven; yet none of them can be pleadable at the bar of divine justice: and, if any sinner shall hearten himself to offend out of the hopes and confidence of these favourable mitigations, the comfort that I can give him, is, that he may howl in hell with thee for his presumption.

PAX TERRIS:

SUASORE ET NUNTIO

JOSEPHO HALLO,

ECCLESIÆ NORVICENSIS SERVO.

REVERENDO IN CHRISTO PATRI AC DO. DOMINO

THOMÆ MORTONO,

ECCLESIÆ DUNELMENSIS PASTORI VIGILANTISSIMO:

QUOT quantosque labores exantlaveris Ecclesiæ Christi, Antistes meritò honorande, norunt, quaquà patet orbis noster Europæus, studiosi ferè omnes; quorum manibus teruntur egregia illa, à te olim edita, Controversiarum volumina, quibus etiam ætas nepotum se plurimum debere fatebitur.

Nempe ea fuit semper Divinæ Providentiæ felix dispensatio, ut nullo ævi vel lustro quidem (ex quo reducis Evangelii lumen orbem beaverit, ne hoc quidem omnium perditissima) permiserit defore ex hoc sacro Præsulum Anglicanorum ordine veritatis suæ vindices, causæ patronos, Ecclesiæ columnas et ἀνλιπίδιας. Testor omnium gentium bibliopolia, testor ipsos rei Evangelicæ hostes acerrimos. Sensit hoc urbs illa Septicollis, orbis olim domina, et ingemuit.

Sed, dum nos in illam pontificiam ἐθελοπερισσοθρησκείαν calamos stringimus, ecce palam exurgentia, alia quædam Lernæi monstri capita, prioribus illis diritate suâ longè magis horrenda: Nearianorum, Socinianorum, Anomæorum, Hæreses redivivas: sed et innumerarum ferè sectarum cujusque generis, Schismata longè atrocissima: quæ utraque Ecclesiæ Dei, nihil profectò minus quàm ipsam perniciem minitantur.

Quid nunc nostrâ magis interest, si ullam posteris Ecclesiam relinquere desideramus, quàm curâ quantâvis διακρίνειν διαφέροντα? hoc est, si mihi liceat interpretari, à vilibus preciosa, à malis pessima, à levibus quibusdam opinionum erroribus sectas, à sectis hæreses, accuratè discriminare; hæreses, verò, quæ ipsa fidei fundamenta penitùs convellunt, ad inferos, unde scilicet hæ furiæ prodierunt, plenè convictas relegare; errores, autem, reliquos blandâ aliquâ, si fieri potest, suasione ad veritatis semitam reducere; juratos quosque ac implacabiles fidei hostes arcere prorsùs, et spiritu oris debellare; leviùs dissidentes piæ cujasdam misericordiæ visceribus excipere, inque sinum admittere; curare, denique, quantum possumus, ut hiantia vulnerum fraternorum ora tandem coalescant.

Illud nempe est, quod ego istic molior, neque pigebit rugosâ hâc præque senio tremulâ manu, hoc quicquid est symboli paci publicæ contulisse. Angor equidem animi, et præ mœrore pene contabesco, (ecquis, verò, piorum aliter se habere potest?) ubi video non inconsutilem modò tunicam, sed et ipsa Christi membra, etiam suis ipsorum manibus, ita miserè à se discerpta, ut quò tandem pertineant, vix quidem à cordato quopiam arbitro dignosci queat.

Licet hæc est ultimi hujusce temporis calamitas, sub quâ nos miselliusque ad vitæ tædium suspiramus. Et quiritare, quidem, Deo ac hominibus, facilè solemus omnes: vix quis, tamen, malo huic averruncando manum admovet: sed et pauci illi, qui istud benevolo in Ecclesiam animo tentarunt εἰρηνοποιοὶ, satis iniquam operis boni mercedem utrinque reportârunt.

Neque, tamen, ita me movent ista, ut à tam salutari instituto, quovis periculo absterreri possim. Deus ille Pacis, cui soli in hâc re totus inservio, opellam hanc qualemcunque suo patrocinio, utinam et æquè felici successu, beare non detrectabit.

Tu, interim, Præsul verè reverende, quem sanctè administrata προεδρία, veneranda canities, singularis pietas, acre judicium, labor indefessus, eximia denique rerum humanarum divinarumque scientia, toti Ecclesiæ Christi charum unà et percelebrem præstiterunt, negotium hoc sacrum tuo, si placet, suffragio promovere velis; ac insuper, ubi βιβλαρίδιον hoc oculis lustrare libuerit, paginam quamque, aut obelo aut asterisco, pro judicio tuo, more Origenico, notare non dedigneris rogat

Conservorum tuorum infimus ac humillimus,

J. H. N.

Norwici: Prid. Cal.
Decem. 1647.

PAX TERRIS.

AUDITE, omnes, quotquot, ubilibet gentium estis, Christiani; et ad ea, quæ in rem conducunt vestram, sedulò attendite.

Satis, jam diu, superque, per totum orbem Christianum depugnatum est: neque desunt, qui classicum ubique canant insuper, sævi præcones; crudelíque ac temerario zelo, et gladios exacuant et animos.

Ecce me, nuncium pacis Evangelicæ; quæ, nisi vos non vultis, fessam ac mutuis vulneribus fœdè cruentatam, penéque exanimem Christi Ecclesiam jam serò invisere ac beare gestit. Nec cui bono ingratum esse potest, quod angelis cœlestibus accininus: neque turpes videri queunt illi pedes, quos olim sanctus Propheta speciosos pronunciavit.

Vos, interim, deponite arma, Christiani; lauróque olivam, quam supplex fero, anteponite. Æternis laudibus meritò effertur miles ille Romanus, qui, hostem jam stricto ense transfixurus, auditâ subitò ad recessum conclamante tubâ, retraxit illico manum, gladiumque recondidit; satius ratus ducis imperio, quàm propriæ vindictæ obtemperare. Quin et vos pariter facitis. Revocat vos, me buccinatore, Deus ab hoc ferali certamine: referte modò pedes manusque: desistite jam nunc; et, post inducias subinde factas, duraturæ pacis consilia inite.

Nolo pluribus præfari, hoc agamus: Σὺν δὲ θεὸς, &c. ut olim cantores Attici *.

SECT. I.

PAUCA fuerunt illa fidei capita †, quæ primævis Christianis necessariò credenda proponebantur.

Neque verò plura sunt, quæ à Christianis quibuscunque, ut scitu creditúque ad salutem necessaria requiruntur. Eadem nempe est, et semper erit communis illa *fides tradita olim sanctis* ‡, cujus professione Christiani indigitamur; nec alia ex eo creari aut debet, aut verò potest §.

Præcipua tot tantarumque inter Christianos litium causa fuit, et adhuc est, curiosa illa credendorum multiplicatio, et subdivisio in

* Σὺν δὲ θεοὶ μάχαιρας. Suid. † *Pauca credenda*. Reg. S. Columb. ‡ Jude 3.
§ *Quod semel verum fuit, semper verum erit*. Salmer. Tom. 9. Tract. 43.

semper divisibilia, in quibus mens humana requiescere nesciit; et acris quædam conclusionum, inde probabili fortasse consecutione, deductarum assertio et propugnatio.

SECT. 2.

Iisdem vestigiis insistere debet remedium, quibus et morbus. Ad sua nimirum principia, ut serò sapere discamus, reducendus est Christianismus; et modus statuendus illis articulis, in quibus velut de fide credendis acquiescere debet plebs Christiana; de reliquis, in hâc parte, silentium.

Optandum ideirco foret, ut hoc demum, œcumenico Christiani orbis conventu, communi consensu transigi posset.

Quòd si istud, quæ pervicax esse solet indoles osorum pacis, sperari nequeat, nihil obstat, quin Ecclesiæ quæque, ab hâc tetrâ animicidarum tyrannide immunes, in hâc certâ pacis inuendæ ratione unanimiter conspirent.

Quòd si neque istud obtineri, præ temporum injuriâ, poterit, privatus quisque Christianorum (quid enim impedit quò minùs unusquisque sui potestatem habeat?) hos sibimet credendi fines firmiter statuat, quos semel positos, quocunque mortalium suadente aut protrahente transgredi nolit.

SECT. 3.

Liberum interea esse et potest et debet scholis Theologicis, ac Theologiæ candidatis quibuscunque, de rebus quibusque in suâ facultate controversis hàc illàc disputare; veritatemque abstrusam latentemque subtili, quâ possunt, disquisitione indagare: quod idem, in unàquâque arte, professoribus ejusdem semper licuit: at, verò, populo Christiano hoc adeo non incumbit, ut neque expediat quidem, neque periculo careat, cùm suo, tùm Ecclesiæ *.

SECT. 4.

Illud ergo concionatoribus quibusque seriò ac sub severioris censuræ pœnâ injungendum, ut intra fines à Deo et Ecclesiâ præscriptos sese continere velint: non nova et exotica dogmata, cerebelli humani fœtus maleformes, populo Christiano venditantes; sed in illis tantùm sese fideliter exerceant, quæ ad pœnitentiam, fidem, bonos mores, quoquo modo, spectaverint: salubria quæque præ-

* *In Romanâ Ecclesiâ, ex parte disputantis redditur disputatio illicita, si disputans sit laicus: quippe id illi, sub pœnâ excommunicationis, interdicitur, etiamsi laicus sit doctus; ne, disputante docto, indocti ansam de fide disputandi arripiant.* Sanchez. de Decal. l. ii. c. 6.

cepta, ad vitæ emendationem, pietatis vigorem, et animarum denique salutem conducentia fidelium auribus usque inculcantes. Avocent, imprimis, plebeculæ Christianæ animos à nimis anxiâ rerum non necessariarum disquisitione; suadeantque non opus esse, ut se questionum inutilium equuleis discrucient: ad ea potiùs curam omnem unicè intendant, quibus animarum suarum salus promoveri possit *.

SECT. 5.

Sed et illud Christianis auditoribus, modò salvi esse vèlint, necessum est, ut procul abs se amoveant impetiginosam illam aurium ac animorum pruriginem, quâ nimis multi laborantes hodie, spretis veteribus morum ac fidei institutis, novis quotidie inhiant; coacervantes sibi magistros, *τὴν ὑγιαινέσην διδασκαλίαν* nauseabundi rejicientes, neque tam cordi studentes quàm palato.

SECT. 6.

Quod si quid fortè cuiquam occurrit à receptâ Ecclesiæ sententiâ alienum, hoc intra secretum pectoris sui scrinium tacitè servet; neque sinat, non sine summo publicæ pacis discrimine, in vulgus evolare. Consulat, interea, illos, quorum labia et conservandæ et promendæ scientiæ constituit Summus Rerum Arbiter, Author Fidei †.

Favete ergo vobis, hoc modo, Christiani; et paci vestræ consulite, sed et publicæ. Figite pedes, imò corda vestra in illis religionis Christianæ capitibus, quæ cognitu creditúque ad salutem necessaria sunt; nec ab illis sinite vos, vel vi vel fraude ullâ, ne latum quidem pilum, dimoveri. De reliquis ne sitis adeò soliciti, ut earum causâ pacem, aut vestram aut Ecclesiæ, violandam censeatis.

SECT. 7.

Non quasi nullos in rerum divinarum cognitione progressus vos facere velim, aut *ἐπὶ τὴν τελειότητα Φέρεσθαι* vetem. Absit!

Congerite quantum potestis sanæ scientiæ. Excolite animos, quantum intra metas cujusque vocationis licuerit, omnifariâ sacro-

* *In iis, quæ apertè in Scripturis posita sunt, inveniuntur illa omnia, quæ continent fidem moresque vivendi; spem, scilicet, atque charitatem.* Aug. de Doctrinâ Christianâ l. ii. c. 9. *In divinis Scripturis quæcunque necessaria sunt manifesta sunt.* Chrys. in 2 Thes. hom. 3. Idem et Bellar. de verbo Dei: l. iv. c. 11.

† *Alia sunt, in quibus etiam aliquando doctissimi atque optimi regulæ Catholicæ defensores, salvâ fidei compage, non consentiunt; et alius alio de unâ re meliùs et veriùs dicit.* Aug. contr. Jul. l. i. c. 2.

rum mysteriorum notitiâ: neque lacte, infantulorum more, semper contenti, contendite ut cibum quemque animæ solidiorem perfectè digerere valeatis.

Memineritis, tamen, interea accuratè distinguere, inter ea, quæ fidei sunt; et ea, quæ sunt opinionis: inter ea, quæ sunt de ipsâ Christianæ religionis essentiâ; et ea, quæ parùm necessariarum appendicularum loco superadjici solent: inter ea, quæ Christianismi sive corpus sive animam spectant; et ea, quæ vestes et ornamenta. Et quicquid aut scire juvat aut ratiocinari, fidem vestram intra suos cancellos semper continendam memineritis; ut frugi paterfamilias solet, qui vicinorum res fortassis intelliget, suas tantùm interea accurat.

Neque in his secundariis tantum vobis arrogetis, ut aliorum judiciis, satis pro magisterio, præscribere velitis; aliterque sentientes atro carbone notandos censeatis: sed eos, qui vobiscum in eâdem communi fide contesserârint, neque aliquâ praxi impiâ ab agendorum normâ recesserint, velut fratres germanos amplexamini *.

SECT. 3.

Quisquis, ergo, crediderit in Deum unum; Spiritum æternum, incomprehensibilem, omnipotentem, conditorem, conservatoremque omnium: Patrem, Filium, Spiritum Sanctum; essentiâ unum, distinctum personis: unum Mediatorem inter Deum et hominem, Jesum Christum; ὁμοούσιον Dei Filium; in plenitudine temporis hominem pro nobis factum, ut hominem suo peccato morti obnoxium redimeret; inque hâc humanâ naturâ passum, crucifixum, mortuum, ac, suâ divinâ virtute, resuscitatum, ascendisse in cœlos, ibique sedere ad dextram Majestatis, perpetuum pro nobis Intercessorem; reversurum inde, suo tempore, vivorum mortuorumque Judicem: Deinde, verò, agnoverit communem quendam fidelium cœtum; partim in cœlis triumphantem, partim militantem in terris; cui soli competit indivisa sanctorum communio, et certa remissio peccatorum: Deinde, resurrectura olim, hæc quæ deponimus, animis socianda, corpora mortalia; malorum quidem ad æternos, cum Diabolo ejusque angelis, cruciatus; bonorum, verò, ad beatæ vitæ gloriosam immortalitatem: Sed et qui Scripturam Sacram ut ipsissimum Dei verbum verè θεόπνευστον ita venerabundus exceperit, ut omnibus in sacro illo Canone contentis humiliter ac piè assentiri paratus fuerit: Baptismum, ut salutare initiationis sacramentum ex institutione Christi suscipiendum; Cœnamque Dominicam, ut cœleste viaticum animæ, summâ cum curâ apparatuque, ut Christi hospitem decet, adeundam censuerit: Denique, Deum in Christo, in cujus merita totus recumbit, sanctè invocet, vitamque suam ad Legis Divinæ normam transigere seriò profiteatur; pietatem erga

* *Potest mihi aliquid videri, alteri aliud: sed neque ego, quod dixero, præscribo alteri; nec ille mihi.* Aug. in Ps. xvi.

Deum juxta ejus præscriptum, erga homines justitiam ac charitatem sedulò exercitaturus: Quisquis, inquam, istâ aretè tenuerit, quicquid sit de reliquis, hic mihi Christianus erit: hunc ego, quodcunque ipsi in credibilium seriè sive desit sive superfluat, Christiano amore usque prosequar. Nimirum, quemcunque Deus filium appellare dignatur, hunc ego, sub quâcunque cœli plagâ vitam duxerit, quodcunque non tenuerit, fratrem salutare non verebor.

SECT. 9.

Nec aliter, profectò, affici debet ullus uspiam Christianorum, quem non committat oportet, ut pro minimis opinionum, sit verbo venia, dissentiunculis pacem publicam fraternamque charitatem dirimi illico sinat. Dari, quidem, debet opera, ut discrepantes fidelium sententiæ, commodâ aliquâ ratione, reconcilientur; intendendique animorum nervi, ut, excogitatis quibusdam satis aptis distinctionibus, opiniones adversæ tandem coalescant: sed, cùm spes nulla suppetat, aut posse hoc unquam fieri, aut (quæ pertinax hominum *φιλαυλία*) sine magno pacis dispendio vel tentari quidem, quanto satius foret, ut, vinculo pacis constricti omnes, quotquot in eâdem fide unanimiter conspiramus, liberum cuique relinquamus, absque contestatâ lite de quibusdam non necessariæ veritatis minutiis aliter atque aliter opinari!

SECT. 10.

Istud nos edocuit, suo exemplo, unicus è cœlo Magister, Dominus noster Jesus Christus; qui, cùm, in mundum veniens, non paucas inter Judæos sectas acerrimè secum dimicantes comperisset, nulli omnium sese immiscuit, nec cujus meminit quidem; id unum solicitus, ut ad pœnitentiam, fidem, justitiam, charitatem, integramque Legis Divinæ observationem genus humanum vocaret excitaretque. Quot, verò, quantosque in suis domesticis errores ac defectus, misericordi silentio, præterierit, pleniorem quandam Spiritûs non ita multò post descensuri revelationem patienter usque præstolatus, nemo est qui nesciat.

Sed et magnus ille Apostolorum coryphæus, Doctor Gentium Paulus, quantâ cum gravitate, quantâ *ἀποδείξα πνεύματος* (1 Cor. ii. 4.) redarguit malos! sanctitatem verò, fidem, charitatem suadet premitque: summam veritatis Christianæ fideliter tradit: errores, huic contrarios, evincit debellatque: atque in his ita totus est, ut, parùm de aliis solicitus, in hoc demum acquiescendum censeat; *Quicunque perfecti sumus hoc sentiamus; et si quid aliter sapitis, et hoc vobis Deus revelabit;* Phil. iii. 15: et alibi; *Si quis videtur φιλόνεικος esse, nos talem consuetudinem non habemus, neque Ecclesiæ Dei;* 1 Cor. xi. 16: denique, Timotheo suo quàm vehementer illud urget, *O Timothee, serva depositum, devitans profanas vocum novitates, et oppositiones falsi-nominis-scientiæ!* 1 Tim. vi. 20.

Ilicet hoc si curæ fuisset succedentium seculorum pastoribus, patres nostri non ita miserè discerptam nobis Scholasticorum tricis Ecclesiam reliquissent.

SECT. 11.

Polycarpi et Aniceti, sequente seculo, amicæ lites sat orbi innotuerunt. Insigne, verò, erat illud sancti martyris Cypriani, qui Carthaginensi 70 Episcoporum Concilio, cui præsidebat, verba faciens, ubi de quæstione non levi agebatur; De rebaptizandis, scilicet, iis qui ab hæreticorum manibus baptismum receperant; "Superest," inquit, "ut de hâc ipsâ re quid singuli sentiamus, proferamus neminem judicantes, aut à jure communionis aliquem, si diversum senserit, amoventes *."

Quid opus est exempla congerere?

Instar omnium esto flos principum Theodosius, cujus illa vox pia ad Demophilum Episcopum vulgò circumfertur: "Si tu pacem fugis, ego te ab Ecclesiâ fugere jubeo †."

Pius ille Imperator, publicæ concordiæ zelo exardescens, convocat omnium sectarum Episcopos, ut, habitâ disceptatoriâ quâdam inter partes collatione, aliquis demum litigii finis statueretur ‡. De hâc tantâ re consulit Nectarium Episcopum; Nectarius Sisinnium lectorem, eximii ingenii virum, à quo hoc responsum tulisse fertur, ut scilicet concertationes dialecticas vitaret omnes, quoniam satis exploratum habuerit disputationes non tam reconciliare schismata, quàm hæreticos eò magis ad contentionem accendere; formulas potiùs fidei consulat, ad has revocet dissidentes; rogetque an in probatissimorum authorum sententiis conquiescere velint: quo facto, imperat ut quæque secta fidei suæ declarationem literis exhiberint. Dies ad hanc rem præstituta est. Sectarum duces, Episcopi conveniunt: scripta proferunt. Tum Imperator, omnibus perlectis, cætera utpote Trinitatis Unitatem dirimentia damnat et lacerat: solam Ὁμοουσίου fidem laudat, approbatque. Novatianis, interim, permittit, ut suis ipsorum ecclesiis securè potirentur; eademque illorum Ecclesiæ indulsit privilegia, quibus suæ ipsius fidei adhærentes fruebantur.

Quin et ipsi quidem Novatiani, quandoquidem eorum mentio inciderit, exemplo nos suo istic aut erudire possunt, aut rubore suffundere; è quibus viri, mulieres, pueri in templo ἀναστασίας extruendo unanimiter operam cum Catholicis conjunxerunt, unàque cum illis strenuè contra Arianos dimicârunt §; deque illo gravi inter Ecclesias Occidentis et Orientis litigio Paschali, postquam ita nimiùm saeviisset Victor Romanus, canonem ἀδιάφορον ediderunt ‖.

Sed quid ego istis immoror? Omnium profectò temporum Christianis hic mos semper fuit, libertatem hanc de rebus parùm gravibus quidlibet opinandi, et sibi assumere et indulgere aliis; dissidentes

* Concil. Carthag. † Socr. l. v. c. 7. ‡ Socr. l. v. c. 10.
§ Socr. l. v. c. 30. ‖ Socr. l. v. c. 20.

æquo animo tolerare; juxta illud, non magis vulgi ore decantatum, quàm piorum usu receptum, carmen:

Non eadem sentire, bonis de rebus iisdem,
Incolumi licuit semper amicitiâ.

SECT. 12.

Ubi de summâ rei Christianæ agitur, "Maledictum silentium quod hîc connivet;" ut probè olim Lutherus. Pulchrè Nazianzenus *: "Philosophiæ ac Dei amori dediti, quique ante tempus in cœlis civium munere funguntur, tametsi alioqui pacati ac moderati sint, hâc tamen in re lenes et faciles esse non sustinent, cùm per silentium et quietem Dei causa proditur: verum hîc admodum bellaces sunt, atque in confligendo acres et feroces."

Sanè, quod de lege olim Judæi, idem nos de fidei confessione pariter usurpemus licet, "De unâquâque syllabâ magni montes pendent." Literulæ unius mutatio, aut vocalis unius interpolatio, quantas in Ecclesiâ vetere turbas meritissimò cierit, sensit orbis, loquuntur historiæ †: scilicet, quæ sono vix omnino discrepant, re tamen ita toto cœlo distant, ut rectè olim Basilius, qui divinis innutriti sunt eloquiis, millies mori mavelint quàm ut literam unam in fidei suæ professione corumpi sinant. Scilicet, hoc non est, quod satrapas ille olim, in Ecclesiâ nugas agere, pro unâquâque fidei particulâ tanquam pro aris et focis dimicare: ni hoc facimus, Christiani non sumus.

Sed et fieri ex adverso potest, ut quæ verborum sono longè aliena issima videntur, re tamen accuratiùs pensitata satis convenire comperiantur. Cyrillus et Johannes Antiochenus, pii Episcopi, anathematizarunt se mutuò, hæresin sibi invicem invidiosò impingentes, postea idem planè sentire intelliguntur. Theodoretus ingerit se huic liti, publicè favet Antiocheno: sat animosè rejicitur: tandem, re penitiùs intellectâ, magnâ cum synodi acclamatione, ut Episcopus planè orthodoxus admittitur ‡. Miserè à se divisas de trium hypostaseωn proprietate ac usu Ecclesias utrasque, Orientales et Occidentales, magnus Athanasius, candidus utriusque sententiæ interpres, ita facilè reconciliavit, ut, jam errore planè grammatico clariùs dilucidato, utraque in eâdem fide unanimes coïsse deprehenderentur. Quicquid obvenerit, fides integra sit opportet: sed ut de parùm necessariis, nuperque adjectis doctrinæ Theologicæ apicibus litem moveamus, nescio an Christianæ charitati, an verò prudentiæ magis contravenire videatur.

* Naz. Orat. 21. † Ει et ιζι in ὁμοιούσιον. ‡ Synod. Ephes.

SECT. 13.

Pessimè, igitur, consuluerunt Ecclesiæ paci, illi, Dominico gregi satis imperiosè *καϊαχυρίευονΐες*, superciliosi orbis magistri, qui suas quascunque determinationes, velut rem fidei, Christianis omnibus, sub necessitate salutis, recipiendas obtrudere non verentur; et propositiones quaslibet suas, ut cum Gersone loquar, hæreticare non dubitant. Sat erat saltem ipsi sancto Athanasio, Symbolo quondam suo (quanquam hoc ab illo fortassis, non tam per modum Symboli quàm per modum doctrinæ cujusdam declaratoriæ, ut Aquinati visum est, editum fuerit) colophonem illum apposuisse: "Hæc est Fides Catholica, absque quâ salvari nemo potest:" nimio quàm audacter factum est nuper à Pio quarto, Episcopo Romano, hunc epilogum suis duodecim novis articulis adjecisse. Ilicet non ideo claves cælorum huic, ut præ se fert, Petri hæredi in manus datæ sunt, ut simplicissimæ fidei in Symbolo Apostolico contentæ plenè assentientes, inde ausu temerario excluderet. Viderit ipse an non, iniquo hoc judicio, cœli januam suæ ipsius animæ audax homo præcluserit; ejusdemque præsumptionis suo exemplo reos eâdem æternæ damnationis pœnâ infeliciter involverit *.

SECT. 14.

Sed neque hoc adeò novum est: priscis etiam seculis, nimis severos sese *ἑτεροδοξίας* censores quidem præbuerunt, qui dissonæ cuique opinioni hæreseωs notam statim inurere parùm veriti sunt. Ita † Eustatiani, Parermenitæ, Procliani, Quartodecimani, Vigilantiani, Animæ Traductæ Assertores, Tralationis 70 Interpretum Desertores; sed et qui Antipodas, mundi alterius architecti, statuere ausi; et qui metallorum transmutationem arte ullà posse fieri tenuerunt; huic olim calumniæ, non nemine impingente, succubuerunt.

Atque ita catalogum auxit nostro ævo Prateolus ‡, ut modò non pauciores quàm quingentos et viginti nigro hoc Theta stigmatizatos comperiamus: inter quos Musculani, Melancthonici, Lutherosiandriani, Buceriani, Oecolampadiani, Martyriani, Farellistæ, Bezanitæ, et quot fere capita Evangelio jam restituto nomen dederunt, inter hæreticorum agmina satis invidiosè recensentur. Deus Bone!

* *In omnibus aliis, præterquam in materiis quæ sunt purè de fide, Ecclesia fallit, et fallitur, servatâ charitate.* Jo. Gerson. de Schismate. *Solius Ecclesiæ Pontificis est res fide tenendas definire: cæteri autem et fallere et falli possunt.* Sanchez. in Decal. l. ii. c. 7. nu. 15. Gerson de Propos. ab Epis. Hæreticanti. Aquin. 2. q. 1. art. 1. *Omnia, quæ ab Ecclesiâ definiuntur credenda, fundamentalia sunt.* Tenet Fisherus Jes. Relat. 3. Colloq. p. 6. Cajetan. ad mentem Thomæ 22. q. 2. dicit, *Simplices, si seducti errant absque pertinaciâ in subtilitatibus fidei, non incurrere hæreticorum culpam: subtilitates autem fidei intelligit indubiè illa quæ non sunt expressa in Symbolo, et ejusmodi in quibus est schisma nostratium.* Franc. à Sta Clara problem. 15. de Ignorantiâ Invincibili.

† Philastrius. August. ‡ Prateol. Elench. Hæret.

ubi tandem Christiana charitas, ubi candor, ubi ἐπιείκεια? At verò fieri aliter non potuit quin, pro accrescente credendorum aut impositione aut abnegatione, atroces istæ dissentientium censuræ consequerentur.

Quòd si quis ita verè insanierit, ut dogmata quædam sua, sive αὐτολέξια, sive ex manifestâ et irrefragabili consequentiâ, notis fidei articulis planè adversa contumaciter tueri velit, hunc, post debitum procedendi morem, velut Ecclesiæ pestem vitandum judicabimus.

Cautè. ergo, istic incedendum erit homini Christiano: et media semper via tenenda, inter vagam quandam, et nullis piæ moderationis metis constrictam prophetandi licentiam; et illos nimis angustos Theologicarum definitionum fines, intra quos severiores quidam arbitri mentis Christianæ disquisitionem prorsùs concludi debere statuerunt.

SECT. 15.

Quandoquidem, verò, tuta quædam latitudo hominum opinionibus necessariò concedenda sit, maximoperè opus erit charitate Christianâ, in aliorum judiciis pensitandis dijudicandisque *.

Quæ, ergo, duriusculè sonant, dubiúmve præ se sensum ferunt, in paradoxis aliorum sententiis, quantum fieri potest, commodâ aliquâ interpretatione emollienda sunt; et in partem meliorem, pro candore Christiano, construenda.

Sed, et in rebus controversis, indulgendum quantum licet alterius opinioni, et quàm possumus proximè ad sententiam adversarii accedendum: id quod, exemplo suo, præivit fidelium pater Abrahamus; qui de pascuorum delectu litiganti nepoti de jure suo homo mansuetus comiter remisit, paci inter utriusque pastores magis consultum volens quàm utilitati propriæ.

Meritò laudatur eximius Theologus Petrus Martyr †, qui, in illâ infælice de re sacramentariâ controversiâ, sic loqui maluit, ut parti etiam adversæ placuisse videretur: sed et Bucerus ‡, Capito, Musculus, aliique Superioris Germaniæ Theologi, in Colloquio Wittenbergensi, de hâc nimis agitatâ lite, ita mentis suæ sententiam expresserunt, ut cum Luthero, Melancthone, Crucigero planè intelligerentur convenisse. Id quod si ab utriusque partis asseclis et Hyperaspistis ex eo pariter præstitum fuisset, bellum illud sacramentarium non tanto cum furore usque sæviisset.

Candor iste si defuerit, immanè quantum lites accrescere, et sententias distorqueri necessum est! Sensit hoc etiam ille ipse Dei Filius, Dominus noster Jesus Christus, in cujus ore fraus nulla unquam inventa est; qui, quod de corporis sui templo impiorum manibus diruendo, suis vero restaurando, verissimè dixisset, aliorsum

* *Aliquando varietas opinionum absque pertinaciâ stat cum unitate.* Cusan. Concord. Cathol. l. i. c. 3.

† Orat. de Vita Petri Martyris. ‡ Bucer. Script. Anglic.

prorsùs traductum, sibique in os, perjurorum testium linguis falsiloquis, ingestum patienter audiit.

Malè etiammum vulgò audit Imperator Constantius, ac si Arianorum causæ nimium favisset: at, verò, si Sozomeno * et Theodoreto † credere fas sit, ipsius opinio, quoad sensum, eadem cum patre et fratre orthodoxis semper fuit; vocem, interim ὁμοιούσιον, non satis commodè interpretatus, desertæ fidei crimen immeritò incurrit: sono, quidem, hæreticus, sensu orthodoxus; quem negabat ὁμοιούσιον, cum confitebatur ante secula ex Patre genitum, Deum Verbum; abdicatis iis, qui condituram dicere Filium audebant. Novimus tamen, qui hunc Satanam et Antichristum hâc ipsâ de causâ palam appellârit.

Celebre, nec cui non notum est illud Socratis ‡ historici. Serapion, Chrysostomi gratiâ fretus, nimis inde insolescens non tribuit Severiano Episcopo honorem tanto Præsuli debitum. Irâ nimis commotus Severianus, hominem acriùs quàm par erat increpat: inter reliqua; "Si Serapion," inquit, "moriatur Christianus, Christus certè nunquam homo factus est." Temerè hoc ab Episcopo dictum illico defert Serapion Chrysostomo; et, subdolè supprimens priorem clausulæ partem, accusat Severianum quasi simpliciter dixisset, "Christus certè non est homo factus." Adducuntur testes. Chrysostomus Episcopum, velut blasphemiæ reum, è civitate exigit; et vix tandem vel Eudoxiæ Imperatricis, vel filii sui Theodosii precibus, censuram revocavit.

Hinc, pari modo, factum est, magnum Athanasium et Marcellum blasphemiæ et impietatis publicè insimulatos fuisse.

Hinc, ut omittam cetera, calumniante ipso Bellarmino, Erasmus Arianorum patronus audit: Lutherus Sanctæ Trinitatis et ὁμοουσιότητος Filii hostis publicus: Melancthon, sed et Scheckius, Tritheistarum fautor: Calvinus, Samosateniorum; Bullingerus, Arianismi; Beza, denique, Nestorianismi advocatus.

Quis, verò, immunis esse poterit à turpi hæreseos vel teterrimæ maculâ, si liberum fuerit adversario, æmuli sui scripta pertrahere quaquà velit: in eâdemque causâ simul accusatorem, testem, judicem agere, pro suo solius arbitratu? Non decet iniquissima hæc alienæ sententiæ distortio hominem Christianum; non, pacis filium: quinimo cum grano salis excipienda sunt verba quorumcunque, si paci, veritati, charitatíque studere curæ nobis fuerit.

SECT. 16.

Parùm igitur credenda sunt æquo judici, quæ adversarii sibi invicem nimio contentionis fervore, imputare solent; sive morum, sive opinionum crimina. Bone Jesu! quæ convitiorum plaustra istic occurrunt lectori Christiano! Nolo puram hanc chartam tam atrocium calumniarum enumeratione conspurcare: neque, verò,

* Sozom. l. iii. c. 17. † Theod. l. iii. c. 3. ‡ Socr. l. vi. c. 10.

hæc est ad pacem, quam tantopere quærimus, via. Pudet me, profectò pudet, tam odiosæ βλασφημίας, quam, ridente Mauro, indignissimè luit læsa utrinque innocentia: neque scio charitás-ne in hâc parte plus patiatur, an justitia. Sapiamus jam serò fratres; neque committamus, ut, per fratrum latera, ipsum quem profitemur Christum vulneremus.

SECT. 17.

DISTINGUENDUM, verò, necessariò erit, ut rectè monuit Augustinus *, inter hæreticos, et hæresiarchas; inter eos qui sequuntur Absalonem simplici corde, et ἀυλοκαλαφίτας populi Christiani seductores †: cum illis agendum mitiùs, utpote misericordiâ saltem aliquâ dignis; hi, verò, ut pacis communis perturbatores, pro disciplinæ Ecclesiasticæ rigore, tractandi severiùs.

Rectè olim Tertullianus ‡: "Religionis non est cogere religionem, quæ sponte suscipi debet, non vi:" suadenda nempe, non cogenda, fides; neque animorum morbi, corporeis medicinis curari unquam possunt. Parùm æquum est igitur, ut meris erroribus intellectus civiles pænè irrogentur: spiritualibus heîc remediis opus est; quæ malis hujusce generis, tempestivè et omni cum lenitate, adhiberi debent.

Illa Procli Episcopi Constantinopolitani laus erat §, comiter cum errantibus egisse; plurésque funibus amoris traxisse ad Christum, quàm reliqui omnes fecissent nimiâ censurarum severitate. Et, sanè, quod Hippocrates de corporis morbis, idem ego de maximè exitialibus mentis erroribus pronunciandum censeo: "Ad ferrum et ignem, non nisi ad ultima desperatæ conditionis remedia, serò esse recurrendum."

Cum meris igitur, quàmlibet gravibus, opinionum ἀμαυρώμασι non aliter quàm sano consilio, solidis argumentis, piis precibus agendum erit. Quòd si sontica quædam hæresis, cum blasphemiâ, aut cum seditione, aut gravi reipublicæ perturbatione conjuncta fuerit; jam locum habet illud Bernardi: "Hæretici corrigendi, ne pereant; coercendi, ne perimant:" cui addendum insuper, si publicæ rei salus inde periclitetur, perimendi, ne perdant ‖.

Enimvero, quod Theodosius et Valentinianus olim Cyrillo Alexandrino Episcopo ¶: Reipublicæ Christianæ constitutio ea, quæ in Deum est pietate præcipuè nititur; multáque inter hanc et illam cognatio ac familiaritas intercedere solet: nam ex sese invicem pendent, et utraque prosperis alterius successibus incrementa sumit.

* Aug. de Utilitate Cred. ad Honorat. *Inter hæreticos, et faventes hæreticis.* Ibid.

† *Quidam sunt scientes hæretici, quidam hæretici non scientes.* Occham. Dial. p. 1. l. iv. ‡ Tertul. ad Scapulum. § Socr. l. vii. c. 40. ‖ *Timendum est ne plures putrescant, dum putribus parcitur.* ¶ Concil. Tom. 1. Bin. p. 726.

SECT. 18.

Interim, quod olim Thurii, vel, ut aliis placet, Lycii, statuisse dicuntur, de novarum legum rogatoribus, ut funem alterâ manu secum ferrent, legem ferendam alterâ; idem ego valde velim novorum in religione dogmatum authoribus decerni: hoc præsertim sæculo, in quo nimiâ luce cæcutimus, et novarum opinionum multitudine pænè ad insaniam laboramus. Excolamus potiùs, quantum possumus, communem certamque quam Deus nobis indulsit Evangelicæ doctrinæ veritatem, quæ nobis ad vitæ æternæ consecutionem abundè sufficiat; inque eâ placidè conquiescamus. Quæ verò dementia est, ubi nota et probè trita ad cælum via clarè ob oculos patescat, aliò excurrere; et quærere nescio quæ diverticula, et nullis calcatam vestigiis viam tentare! ac clamare tandem, "Quis me ignis fatuus ad hanc foveam intutásve paludes miserum erronem deduxit?"

SECT. 19.

Consectaria, quæ ex cujusque sententiâ adversarii acumine erui solent, parùm æquum fuerit cuiquam authori pro suis impingere *: lubrica enim est consecutionum fides; et plæraque fortassis errare possumus, non tam Theologiæ, quàm Logices vitio, aut Philosophiæ naturalis inscitia. Exemplo sit tritum illud Scholæ. Risibilis ut sit, homini omnimodò proprium concedi solet: jam, si quis Christum non fuisse risibilem tenuerit, quæritur hæreticús-ne habendus fuerit: affirmant aliqui; "Destruit siquidem," inquiunt, "humanam Christi naturam; hominem negat, quem negat risibilem:" negant alii, idque veriùs; quandoquidem hic homo humanam Christi naturam arctè tenere rotundè profitetur, risibilitatem verò, velut qualitatem ab humanâ formâ necessariò profluentem negat: philosophicus nempe hic error erit, hæresis non est.

Sunt, quidem, consequentiæ quædam ita liquidò necessariæ, ut, primo statim intuitu, non minùs certò constent, quàm ipsa, è quibus immediatè deducuntur, principia. Quales sunt, quæ à certis intrinsecísque causis, ad sua propria et indubitata effecta, sed et reciprocè, irrefragabiliter derivantur: ut, "Deus est: ergo omnipotens, omniscius."

Sunt et aliæ, quæ, ut ut nobis non minùs necessariæ videantur vi certissimæ rationis illatæ sequelæ, alteri tamen non adeò indubiæ sunt, quin ut justâ aliquâ distinctione satis commodè eludi possint: ita, verò, ut qui consecutionem neget, suis tamen principiis immotus adhærescat. Quales illæ Gualterii Jesuitæ: "Negat Theo-

* *Nostrum est, non quid per se ex quovis sequatur dogmate; sed quid in illorum conscientiâ spectare, qui tenent illud dogma.* Bucer. Pesantius in Thom. 1. q. 2. disp. 1. *Canus et Valentia aiunt hunc esse hæreticum, non directè et immediatè, sed indirectè et reductivè.* Sanchez. l. ii. c. 7. nu. 33.

dorus Beza posse fieri, ut pluribus simul in locis Christi corpus verè ac substantialiter præsens sit: ergo negat Beza Dei omnipotentiam:" "Adscribunt Protestantes Deo plus aliquid quàm meram permissionem mali: Deum ergo peccati authorem faciunt." Sed et è nostris non nemo: "Papista Christum fingit creaturam: ergo Arianus est:" "Ex farinâ Christum conficit; non ergo ex purâ Beatæ Virginis substantiâ: Apollinarista igitur." Ilicet hoc est, quod Reformatas Christi Ecclesias ita miserè distrahit: nimis audax ac pertinax consequentiarum plenè non certarum fiducia: "Humanitatem Christi omnipræsentem asseritis," unus ait: "ergo humanam Christi naturam prorsùs tollitis; siquidem hoc soli Deitati proprium." "Humanæ Christi naturæ ubiquitatem pernegatis vos," regerit alter: "ergo unionem hypostaticam omnino destruitis." Atqui, verò, neque hoc neque illud. Fundamentum tenemus utrique: superstructuram abominamur.

SECT. 20.

In secundariâ, sive credendorum sive agendorum, serie, non decet hominem Christianum illa morosa ἀυθάδεια; ut nihil primævæ succedaneæque Ecclesiæ, ceu judicio ceu praxi, tribuendum judicet. Illud potiùs animum inducat, ut certò statuat, quicquid universalis Christi Ecclesia per omne ævum crediderit fecerit ve, huic contravenire insolentissimæ esse insaniæ *.

SECT. 21.

Liberum, interea, fuerit regno cuique Christiano ac reipublicæ, pro variâ cujusque conditione, leges sibi ferre proprias quasique municipales; sive procurandæ sive conservandæ paci Ecclesiasticæ; pietati tamen, justitiæ, charitati, undequaque consentaneas: neque par est, interim, ita præjudicare aliis, ut quod huic satis commodum ac salubre comperimus, id alteri necessariò prescribamus: jure suo fruantur Ecclesiæ quæque, dummodo condescentia et suorum animis salutaria injunxerint †.

* *Sapientis est mutare consilium.* Vivald de Depositione. *Quid neque contra fidem nec bonos mores injungitur indifferenter est habendum, et pro eorum inter quos vivitur societate utendum* Aug. Ep ad Januar. 118. *In his rebus, de quibus nihil certi statuit Scriptura Divina, nos populi Dei, vel instituta Majorum pro lege tenenda sunt.* Aug. Epist. 86.

† *Graviter peccant, qui propter indifferentes ceremonias turbant Ecclesias, damnant alios principes et magistratus: hæccine pietas, quam jactamus? hæccine charitas, quam debemus fratribus et Ecclesiis?* Zanch. 1. de Redemptore, p. 765.

SECT. 22.

Æquum quidem est, ut Deum, in Scripturis suis loquentem, rerum suarum judicem statuamus omnes: ubi, verò, difficiliora occurrerint Scripturæ loca, absit ut privatus quisque singularia spiritûs sui interpretamenta sequenda sibi proponere ausit: quin potiùs communem Doctorum Ecclesiæ sensum suo semper præferendum modestè judicet.

SECT. 23.

De rebus quibusque mediis, sive agendis sive judicandis, stet nobis dare operam, ut, ubi capita parùm consentire possunt, corda interim unanimiter conspirent; neque se sinant abs se mutuò dissilire, insolubili Christiani amoris affectu usque cohæsura: idque demum à nobis impetramus, nos fratrum sive opiniones sive actiones adiaphoras miti quâdam tolerantiâ et æquanimitate semper excepturos, et in partem tutissimam interpretaturos.

Damnentur ad imum usque barathrum illa nominum opprobria, Lutheranorum, Calvinianorum, Arminianorum, Puritanorum, Prelaticorum, Presbyterianorum, Independentium; quæ fidei ejusdem professoribus vulgò objectari solent. Christiani et audiamus, et verè simus; non magis fidei unitate, quàm charitatis vinculo conjunctissimi. Amemus, adjuvemus, protegamus nos mutuò. Deum denique communem, nostrum Patrem, Redemptorem, Paracletum, in quo nos unum sumus, et non seculares hasce distractiuncularum querelas præ oculis habentes, illud unum ambiamus æmulemúrque, quis nostrûm fide firmior, charitate ferventior, piis officiis bonisque operibus cumulatior, Deo denique proximior evaserit.

SECT. 24.

Hæc sunt, Fratres Christiani, quæ vos modò volui. Obnixè insuper per Christi viscera efflagitans, ut animos vestros ad sanctam pacem studiosè componere velitis, omnésque de rebus non necessariis disceptationes prorsùs inutiles, sed et haud parùm noxias rejiciatis.

Preciúmme operæ fuerit pacem vobis operosè collaudare, quam, summi instar beneficii, terris apprecati sunt angeli; quam, ditissimi patrimonii loco, legavit nobis cœlum repetiturus, Cœli Dominus, Servator noster Jesus Christus? Nimis, profectò, irritus foret omnis iste labor.

Christianos alloquor, alloquor pios Ecclesiæ filios: communis Matris incollumitatem, Evangelii successum, ac plærarúmque animarum salutem in hoc cardine verti facilè persentiscitis. Discordiæ utriusque, tam civilis quàm ecclesiasticæ, malis ferè omnes ita

ingemuimus, ut vix ullus suspiriis lacrymisve locus deinceps videatur superesse. Ilicet tempus nunc est, ut, jam serò, paci litemus Evangelicæ; ut gladios in ligones, hastásque in falces, Christiani omnes tandem convertamus *.

SECT. 25.

AUDIO inconsultos quosdam, ubi ulla pacis mentio inciderit, Veritatem illico inclamitare ac Justitiam: præque his flocci facere, quam tantopere desideramus, fidelium unitatem ac concordiam; quasi, verò, cordatus quispiam hæc à se invicem divelli ac disjungi unquam patiatur. Pax certè non est, quæ veritate destituitur; sed iniqua quædam in errore conspiratio: pax non est, quæ vacat justitiâ; sed pusillanimis quædam, et desidiosa populi degeneris, et cuivis tyrannidi succembentis servitus.

Scilicet aut se mutuò exosculantur pax et veritas, veritas et justitia; aut ipsæ, quæ videntur, non sunt. Veritatem quovis pretio redimere jubet regum sapientissimus, nec quo vendere; sed huic, interea, valore proximam voluit esse pacem, qui Pacis Deus appellari amat.

Nulla, certè, veritatis Christianæ particula est, quam quis bonus sciens prudénsque, quâvis mercede, quovis metu prodere velit; et, timidâ quâdam abnegatione, prorsùs abdicare †. Sunt tamen, interea, quidam veritatis parùm necessarii apices, qui publicæ pacis studio tantisperdum celari et possunt et verò debent; et in universalibus, non tam dolosus versatur, quàm pacificus. Nempe, unum hoc est, quod vos iterum atque iterum monitos velim: De Fidei Christianæ animâ lis est? præ hàc ψυχήν ἡμῶν ȣ̓ τιμίαν ἔχομεν, cum Heroe illo Evangelico: hanc nos fortiter usque propugnemus, σὺν δορί, σὺν ἀσπίδι. Voveamúsque, juxta magnanimum illud matrum olim Laconicarum mandatum ‡, ἢ τᾶν ἢ ἐπὶ τᾶς. De vestis interea fimbriis non nimis atrociter decertemus.

Libertate nostrâ Christianâ modestè utamur et prudenter: neque ita nos geramus, ut, dum ergastulum quoddam nimis fortè angustum refugimus, per campos latè patentes, perque loca invia ac deserta, onagrorum more, vagi discurramus; ventùmque anheli hauriamus, nullis aut legum frænis aut pietatis sepimentis contineri sustinentes. Sed, si verè sapimus, ἀληθευόντες ἐν ἀγάπῃ, Eph. iv. 15. ea, quæ fidei sunt, etiam cum vitæ dispendio tueamur; quæ præter fidem, aut susque deque habeamus, aut certè non impetuosius prosequamur; quæ, denique, contra fidem abominemur, et, quantum possumus, animosè debellemus: et ita, demum, nos comparemus, ut per omnia pares simus divini illi παρεκλήσει, quam Corinthiacis

* Ἀρκεῖ τὰ γεγονότα, ἀρκεῖ. μισῶ πόλεμον ἐμφύλιον κἂν κρατῷ. Otho. apud Dion.

† *Oportebat quidem nihil non ferre, ne Ecclesiam Dei scinderes.* Dionysius ad Novatum. Euseb. l. vi. c. 46.

‡ Suid. V. Lycurgus.

suis impertiit Gentium Apostolus. *Fidelis est Deus, per quem vocati estis in communionem Filii ipsius, Domini nostri, Jesu Christi. Obsecro, autem, vos, fratres, per nomen Domini nostri, Jesu Christi, ut idem loquamini omnes; et non sint inter vos dissidia, sed sitis coagmentati eâdem mente et eâdem sententiâ;* 1 Cor i. 10, 11.

ὁμοψήφως καὶ ὁμοψύχως.

SECT. 26.

Quòd si qui sint, qui sententias suas impias cervicosâ animositate, ut cum Gersone loquar, non sine publicæ pacis dispendio, tueri velint; non aliâ profectò erga hos quàm Paulinâ utar charitate: *Utinam abscindantur, qui vos conturbant:* abscindantur, inquam, non tam ore gladii, quàm gladio oris. Haud, equidem, invenio, ubi quem hæreticum Apostolus sæculari potestati tradiderit: tradidit, quidem, Satanæ; non tamen ut damnaretur illico, sed *ut discerent non blasphemare.* Habet ensem suum magistratus: habent et suum non Petri modò successores, sed et Apostolorum: stringendus erit ubi opus utérque; ita verò, ut alter alteri subsidio esse possit; hominum animabus, utérque. Ne vulpeculæ, quidem, ipsæ, vitibus Domini infestæ, ferendæ sunt. Sed, si quis ex Arii vel Socini nemore conturbator aper vineam Christi penitùs vastare aggressus fuerit, nunc,

——————Odora canum vis
Retia rara, plagæ, lotoque venabula ferro,

in auxilium vocanda sunt: sylvæ cingendæ: et quidvis tentandum, denique, ut fera bellua capiatur; atque ita secum agi sentiat, ut à tam manifesto suffossionis periculo Ecclesia Dei deinceps liberetur.

Verè ille olim, "Aliæ sunt leges Papiniani, aliæ Christi;" utrarúmque tamen scopus unus idémque est, ut benè sit populo Dei, cujus salus suprema lex.

In Libano hujus mundi, licèt passim exaudiantur operariorum clamores, fabrorum secures, serrarum stridores, et lapicidarum tuditantium mallei; at in monte sancto, in Templo Domini ædificando, vult Deus, ut ne lignei quidem malleoli sonus aurem verberet.

At, at, Bone Deus, ubi sumus? quis istic strepitus? quæ ferramentorum collisio? quis hic horridus cadentium saxorum fragor? destruitur nimirum, destruitur planè, hoc modo, Templum Dei; (ita enim Psaltes olim, *etiam nunc sculpturas ejus simul secte et tuditibus tundunt;* Ps. lxxiv. 6.) sic, verò, ut extrueretur uspiam domus Dei, fando nunquam auditum est.

O nos in illa servatos tempora, de quibus Servator noster olim

prænonuit : *Futurum est, ut audiatis bella, et rumores bellorum : insurgent gens in gentem, et regnum in regnum !* O verè ἀρχὴν τῶν ὠδίνων ! sed et *pænè* etiam *exitum ;* Matt. xxiv. 6, 7, 8. Illud, enim, unum, in tam communi bonorum omnium cordolio, afflictissimis piorum animis solatio esse potest, indicia hæc esse appropinquantis, quasique præ foribus astantis, liberatoris nostri Domini, Jesu Christi. Ille nempe Benedictus in secula Dei Filius, qui in primo suo adventu

Belli ferratas portas, postésque refregit ; Ennius.

neque in orbem nisi Augusti sceptro pacatissimum descendere voluit. Secundi adventûs sui tempus in illud ævum conjecit, in quo turbatissima futura sunt omnia ; ut, cum extremâ et deploratissimâ inquietudine fessus laborârit orbis, Principem Pacis, Veritatis et Justitiæ Vindicem, Patientiæ Remuneratorem, Consolatorem Ecclesiæ, et avidiùs expectet et excipiat alacriùs.

Etiam veni, Domine Jesu, veni citò. Amen.

PSALMUS 133.

Tandem experimur, hactenus pænè obruti
Discordiarum fluctibus,
Fraterna quid pax valeat, et concordium
Unita virtus civium.
Nil charitate mutuâ salubrius,
Nil uspiam est amœnius:
Nec suaviorem exhalat auram balsami
Aromatumque principum
Perfecti odoris unctio, quæ verticem
Aaronis effusa in sacrum
Sanctum verendi Antistitis barbam imbuit,
Et inde lapsu defluit
Auratæ in imas usque vestis fimbrias:
Nec, denique, affluentiam
Tantam minatur imber ille roscidus,
Qui fertiles inebriat
Hermonis agros; aut perusta solibus
Rigat Sionis jugera:
Illic benigna rerum abundat copia;
Illic piæ tranquillitas
Vitæ; propitii quam benignitas Dei
In sæculum usque protrahet.

Ex metaphrasi Manuscr. Collegæ mei p. m.
Joannis Dunæi Barstapulensis.

RESOLUTIONS AND DECISIONS

OF

DIVERS PRACTICAL CASES

OF

CONSCIENCE,

IN CONTINUAL USE AMONGST MEN.

IN FOUR DECADES.

BY JOSEPH, BISHOP OF NORWICH

I HAVE perused these Four Decades of Practical Cases of Conscience with much satisfaction and delight: and find them to be, in respect of their subject matter, so profitable, necessary, and daily useful; and so piously, learnedly, and judiciously discussed and resolved; that they seem unto me best, though they come last, like the wine in the marriage-feast made sacred by Christ's divine presence and miracle: and, therefore, do well deserve, amongst many other the divine dishes and delicacies wherewith this right reverend, pious, and learned author, hath plenteously furnished a feast for the spiritual nourishment and comfortable refreshing of God's guests, both the approbation and commendation of all, and myself amongst the rest, though unworthy to pass my censure on such a subject:

JOHN DOWNAME.

TO THE READER.

OF all Divinity, that part is most useful, which determines Cases of Conscience: and, of all Cases of Conscience, the Practical are most necessary; as action is of more concernment, than speculation: and, of all Practical Cases, those, which are of most common use, are of so much greater necessity and benefit to be resolved, as the errors thereof are more universal, and therefore more prejudicial to the society of mankind.

These I have selected out of many; and, having turned over divers Casuists, have pitched upon these Decisions, which I hold most conformable to enlightened reason and religion. Sometimes, I follow them; and, sometimes, I leave them, for a better guide.

In the handling of all which, would I have affected that course, which Seneca blames in his Albutius, to say all that might be spoken, I could easily have been more voluminous, though perhaps not more satisfactory.

If these lines meet with different judgments, I cannot blame either myself or them. It is the opinion of some Schoolmen, which seems to be made good by that instance in the Prophet Daniel, that even the good angels themselves may holily vary in the way, though they perfectly meet in the end. It is far from my thoughts, to obtrude these my Resolutions, as peremptory and magisterial, upon my Readers: I only tender them submissively; as probable advices to the simpler sort of Christians, and as matter of grave censure to the learned.*

May that Infinite Goodness, to whose only glory I humbly desire to devote myself and all my poor endeavours, make them as beneficial, as they are well meant to the good of his Church, by the unworthiest of his servants,

J. H. *B. N.*

Higham, near Norwich:
March 29, 1650.

* Dan. x. 13, 20, 21. xii. 5.

RESOLUTIONS.

THE FIRST DECADE.

CASES OF PROFIT AND TRAFFIC.

CASE I.

Whether is it lawful for me, to raise any profit by the loan of money ?*

You may not expect a positive answer, either way. Many circumstances are considerable, ere any thing can be determined.

First, who is it, that borrows? A poor neighbour, that is constrained out of need? or a merchant, that takes up money for a freer trade? or a rich man, that lays it out upon superfluous occasions? If a poor man borrow out of necessity, you may not expect any profit for the loan; Deut. xv. 7, 8, 9: to the poorest of all, we must give, and not lend: to the next rank of poor, we must lend freely. But, if a man will borrow that money, which you could improve, for the enriching of himself; or, out of a wanton expence, will be laying out that, which might be otherwise useful to you, for his mere pleasure; the case is different: for God hath not commanded you to love any man more than yourself; and there can be no reason, why you should vail your own just advantage to another man's excess.

Secondly, upon what terms do you lend? whether, upon an absolute compact for a set increment, whatever become of the principal; or, upon a friendly trust to a voluntary satisfaction, according to the good improvement of the sum lent? The former is not safe; and, where there hath been an honest endeavour of a just benefit disappointed, either by unavoidable casualty or force, may not be rigorously urged, without manifest oppression: the latter can be no other than lawful: and, with those, that are truly faithful and conscionable, the bond of gratitude is no less strong, than that of law and justice.

Thirdly, if upon absolute compact; is it upon a certainty, or an

* See Note, at p. 33. of the preceding Volume. EDITOR.

adventure? for, where you are willing to hazard the principal, there can be no reason but you should expect to take part of the advantage.

Fourthly, where the trade is ordinarily certain, there are yet farther considerations to be had: to which I shall make way, by these undeniable grounds:—

That the value of moneys or other commodities is arbitrary, according to the sovereign authority and use of several kingdoms and countries:

That whatsoever commodity is saleable, is capable of a profit in the loan of it; as a horse, or an ox, being that it may be sold, may be let out for profit.

Money itself is not only the price of all commodities in all civil nations, but it is also, in some cases, a trafficable commodity: the price whereof rises and falls, in several countries, upon occasion; and yieldeth either profit or loss, in the exchange.

There can be no doubt, therefore, but that money, thus considered, and as it were turned merchandise, may be bought and sold, and improved to a just profit.

But the main doubt is, whether money, merely considered as the price of all other commodities, may be let forth for profit, and be capable of a warrantable increase.

For the resolving whereof, be it determined,

1. That all usury, which is an absolute contract for the mere loan of money, is unlawful, both by law natural and positive, both divine and human.

Nature teacheth us, that metals are not a thing capable of a superfœtation: that no man ought to set a price on that, which is not his own tin: that the use of the stock once received, is not the lender's, but the borrower's; for the power and right of disposing the principal is, by contract, transferred, for the time, to the hands of him that receives it; so as he, that takes the interest by virtue of such transaction, doth but, in a mannerly and legal fashion, rob the borrower.

How frequent the Scripture * is, in the prohibition of this practice, no Christian can be ignorant. And, as for Human Laws, raised even from the mere light of nature amongst heathen nations, how odious and severely interdicted usurary contracts have been in all times, it appears sufficiently, by the records which we have of the Decrees of Egypt †, of Athens, of Rome: and not only by the restraint of the Twelve Tables, and of Claudius and Vespasian; but by the absolute forbiddance of many popular statutes, condemning this usage. Tiberius himself, though otherwise wicked enough, yet would rather furnish the Banks with his own stock, to be freely let out for three years to the citizens, upon only security of the sum doubled in the forfeiture, than he would endure this griping and

* Exod. xxii. 25. Lev. xxv. 36, 37. Deut. xxiii. 19, 20. Neh. v. 7. Ps. xv. 5. Prov. xxviii. 8. Ezek. xviii. 8.

† Vid. Alexand. ab Alexand. Gen. dierum l. 1. c. 7.

oppressive transaction. And how wise Cato drove all usurers out of Sicily, and Lucullus freed all Asia from this pressure of Interest, history hath sufficiently recorded.

As for Laws Ecclesiastical, let it be enough that a Council* hath defined, that to say usury is not a sin, is no better than heresy: and, in succeeding times, how liable the usurer hath ever been to the highest censures of the Church, and how excluded from the favour of Christian burial, is more manifest than to need any proof.

2. However it is unlawful to covenant for a certain profit for the mere loan of money; yet there may be and are circumstances appending to the loan, which may admit of some benefit to be lawfully made by the lender for the use of his money: and especially these two; the loss that he sustains, and the gain that he misses, by the want of the sum lent. For, what reason can there be, that, to pleasure another man, I should hurt myself? that I should enrich another, by my own loss?

If, then, I shall incur a real loss or forfeiture, by the delayed payment of the sum lent; I may justly look for a satisfaction from the borrower: yea, if there be a true danger of loss to me imminent, when the transaction is made, nothing hinders but that I may by compact make sure such a sum, as may be sufficient for my indemnity.

And, if I see an opportunity of an apparent profit, that I could make fairly by disbursing of such a sum *bonâ fide;* and another, that hath a more gainful bargain in chase, shall sue to me to borrow my money out of my hand for his own greater advantage; there can be no reason, why, in such a case, I should have more respect to his profit, than my own; and why should I not, even upon pact, secure unto myself such a moderate sum, as may be somewhat answerable to the gain which I do willingly forego, for his greater profit? since it is a true ground, which Lessius, with other Casuists, maintains against Sotus and Durand, that even our hopes of an evident commodity are valuable; and that, no less than the fears of our loss.

Shortly, for the guidance of our either caution or liberty, in matter of borrowing and lending, the only cynosure is our Charity: for in all human and civil acts of commerce, it is a sure rule, That whatsoever is not a violation of charity cannot be unlawful; and, whatsoever is not agreeable to charity can be no other than sinful. And, as charity must be your rule, so yourself must be the rule of your charity: look what you could wish to be done to you by others, do but the same to others, you cannot be guilty of the breach of charity. The maxims of traffic are almost infinite: only charity, but ever inseparable from justice, must make the application of them. That will teach you, that every increase by loan of money is not usurary; and that those, which are absolutely such, are damnable: that will teach you to distinguish, betwixt the one improvement of loan and the other; and will tell you, that if you can find out

* Concil. Viennens.

a way, whether by loan or sale, to advance your stock, that may be free from all oppression and extortion, and beneficial as well to others as to yourself, you need not fear to walk in it with all honest security. But, in the mean time, take good heed that your heart beguile you not in misapplications: for we are naturally too apt, out of our self-love, to flatter ourselves with fair glozes of bad intentions; and rather to draw the rule to us, than ourselves to the rule.

But, while I give you this short solution, I must profess to lament the common ignorance or mistaking of too many Christians, whose zeal justly cries down usury as a most hateful and abominable practice, but in the mean time makes no bones of actions no less biting and oppressive. They care not how high they sell any of their commodities, at how unreasonable rates they set their grounds, how they circumvent the buyer in their bargains; and think any price just, any gain lawful, that they can make in their markets: not considering, that there is neither less, nor less odious usury, in selling and letting, than there is in lending. It is the extortion, in both, that makes the sin; without which, the kind or terms of the transaction could not be guilty. Surely, it must needs be a great weakness, to think, that the same God, who requires mercy and favour in lending, will allow us to be cruel in selling. Rigour, and excess, in both, equally violates the law of commutative justice, equally crosses the law of charity. Let those, therefore, that make scruple of an usurious lending, learn to make no less conscience of a racking bargain: otherwise, their partial obedience will argue a gross hypocrisy; and they shall prove themselves the worst kind of what they hate, usurers: for, in the ordinary loan-usury, the borrower hath yet time to boot for his money; but here, the buyer pays down an excessive interest, without any consideration at all, but the seller's cruelty.

For the fuller clearing of which point; whereas you ask

CASE II.

Whether I may not sell my wares as dear as I can, and get what I may of every buyer?

I answer,

THERE is a due price to be set upon every saleable commodity: else, there were no commerce to be used among men: for, if every man might set what rate he pleases upon his lands or goods, where should he find a buyer? Surely, nothing could follow, but confusion and want: for mere extremity must both make the market, and regulate it.

The due price is that, which cuts equally and indifferently, betwixt the buyer and seller: so as the seller may receive a moderate gain, and the buyer a just pennyworth.

In those countries, wherein there is a price set by public authority upon all marketable commodities, the way of commerce is well expedited; and it is soon and easily determined, that it is meet men should be held close to the rule.

But, where all things are left to an arbitrary transaction, there were no living, if some limits were not set to the seller's demands.

These limits must be the ordinary received proportion of price, current in the several countries, wherein they are sold; and the judgment of discreet, wise, experienced, and unconcerned persons; and the well-stated conscience of the seller.

If men shall wilfully run beyond these bounds, taking advantage of the rareness of the commodity, the paucity or the necessity of the buyers, to enhance the price to an unreasonable height; they shall be guilty of the breach of charity; and, in making a sinful bargain, purchase a curse.

Not that a man is so strictly tied to any other's valuation, as that he may not, upon any occasion, ask or receive more than the common price; or that, if the market rise, he is bound to sit still. There may be just reason, upon a general mortality of cattle, to set those beasts that remain at a higher rate; or, upon a dearth of grain, or other commodities, to heighten the price: but, in such cases, we must be so affected, as that we grudge to ourselves our own gain; that we be not in the first file of enhancers; that we strive to be the lowest in our valuation; and labour, what we may, to bring down the market: always putting ourselves, in our conceits, into the buyer's room; and bethinking how we would wish to be dealt with, if we were in his clothes.

It is lawful for the seller, in his price, to have regard, not to his rents and disbursements only, but to his labour and cost, to his delay of benefit, to his loss in managing, to his hazard or difficulty in conveyance; but all these in such moderation, as that he may be a just gainer by the bargain: not setting the dice upon the buyer; not making too much haste to be rich, by the secret spoils of an oppressed neighbour.

Those things, whose end is only pleasure or ornament, as a jewel, a hawk, or a hound, can admit of no certain value. The owner's affection must estimate it, and the buyer's desire must make up an illimited bargain: but, even in these, and all other commodities that carry the face of unnecessary, conscience must be the Clerk of the Market; and tell us, that we must so sell, as we could be willing to buy.

From all which it follows,

That the common maxim current * in the shops of trade, That things are so much worth as they can be sold for; and those ordinary rules of chapmen, That men, who are masters of their wares, may heighten their prices at pleasure, and get what they can out of all comers; and whatever they can get out of the simplicity or ne-

* Dom. Sot. de Justit. et Jure: l. vi. quæst. 2. Artic. 3. tradit hoc, ut Axioma Jurisconsultorum.

cessity of the buyers, is lawful prize; are damnably uncharitable and unjust.

It were a happy thing, if, as it is in some other well-ordered nations, there were a certain regulation of the prices of all commodities by public authority; the wisdom whereof knows how to rise and fall, according to the necessity of the occasion: so as the buyer might be secured from injury, and the seller restrained from a lawless oppression. But, where that cannot be had, it is fit that justice and charity should so far overrule men's actions, that every man may not be carried, in matter of contract, by the sway of his own unreasonable will; and be free to carve for himself, as he lists, of the buyer's purse. Every man hath a bird in his bosom, that sings to him another note.

A good conscience, therefore, will tell you, that if, taking advantage of the ignorance or unskilfulness of the buyer, you have made a prey of him, by drawing from him double the worth of the commodity sold, you are bound to make restitution to him accordingly; and in a proportion so, in all the considerable sums, which you shall have, by your false protestations and oaths and plausible intimations, wrought out from an abused buyer; above that due price, which would make you a just and rightly moderated gainer: for, assure yourself, all, that you willingly do this way, is but a better-coloured picking of purses; and what you thus get is but stolen goods, varnished over with the pretence of a calling; and will prove, at the last, no other than gravel in your throat.

CASE III.

Whether is the seller bound to make known to the buyer the faults of that which he is about to sell?

It is a question, that was long since disputed, betwixt the Heathen Sages, Antipater and Diogenes, as Cicero * informs us: with whom Cato so decides it, as that his judgment may justly shame and condemn the practice of too many Christians.

For a full answer, due consideration must be had of divers circumstances.

First, what the nature and quality of the fault is; whether it be slight and unimporting; or, whether such, as may vitiate the thing sold, and render it either unuseful or dangerous to the buyer: or, again, whether the fault be apparent; or secret.

Both these do justly vary the case.

Slight and harmless faults may be concealed without injustice: main and importing must be signified.

If apparent defects be not discerned by the buyer, he may thank himself: secret faults known only to the seller, such as may be prejudicial to the buyer, ought not to be concealed; or, if they be

* Tul. de Offic. l. iii.

concealed so, as that the buyer pays for it as sound and perfect, bind the seller in conscience, either to void the bargain or to give just satisfaction.

Secondly, it should be considered, whether the buyer, before the bargain be stricken, hath required of the seller to signify the faults of the commodity to be sold; and, out of a reliance upon the seller's fidelity and warrant, hath made up the match: or, whether, in the confidence of his own skill, without moving any question, he enter resolutely, *(de bene esse)*, upon the bargained commodity.

If the former, a double bond lies upon the seller to deal faithfully with the buyer; and therefore to let him know the true condition of the thing exposed to sale: that so, either he may take off his hand, or, if he shall see, that, notwithstanding that defect, it may serve his turn, he may proportion the price accordingly: otherwise he shall be guilty, besides falsehood and oppression, of perfidiousness.

But, if the buyer will peremptorily rely upon his own judgment; and, as presuming to make a gain of that bargain, which the seller, out of conscience of the imperfection, sets, as he ought, so much lower as the defect may be more disadvantageous to the buyer, will go through with the contract, and stand to all hazards; I see no reason, why the seller may not receive the price stipulated: but, withal, if the match may carry danger in it to the buyer; as, if the horse sold be subject to a perilous starting or stumbling, the house sold have a secret crack that may threaten ruin, or the land sold be liable to a litigious claim which may be timely avoided; the seller is bound in conscience, at least after the bargain, to intimate unto the buyer these faulty qualities, that he may accordingly provide for the prevention of the mischief that may ensue.

But if the seller shall use art to cover the defects of his commodity, that so he may deceive the buyer in his judgment of the thing bargained for; or shall mix faulty wares with sound, that they may pass undiscovered; he is more faulty than his wares, and makes an ill bargain for his soul.

In this, shortly, and in all other cases that concern trade, these universal rules must take place.

That it is not lawful for a Christian chapman to thrive by fraud:

That he may sell upon no other terms, than he could wish to buy:

That his profit must be regulated by his conscience; not his conscience by his profit:

That he is bound, either to prevent the buyer's wrong; or, if heedlessly done, to satisfy it:

That he ought rather to affect to be honest, than rich:

And, lastly, That, as he is a member of a community both civil and Christian, he ought to be tender of another man's indemnity, no less than of his own.

CASE IV.

Whether may I sell my commodities the dearer, for giving days of payment?

THERE is no great difference, betwixt this case, and that of loan, which is formerly answered: save that there, money is let; here, commodities, money-worth: here, is a sale; there, a lending: in the one, a transferring of the right and command for the time; in the other, perpetually. But the substance, both of the matter and question, is the same: for, in both, there seems to be a valuation of time; which, whether in case of mutation or sale, may justly be suspected for unlawful.

For answer:—

There are three stages of prices acknowledged by all Casuists: the highest, which they are wont to call rigorous; the mean: and the lowest. If these keep within due bounds, though the highest be hard, yet it is not unjust; and if the lowest be favourable, yet it is not always necessary.

If then you shall proportion but a just price to the time and worth of your bargain; so as the present shall pass for the easiest price, some short time for the mean, and the longer delay for the highest; I see not wherein, all things considered, you do offend.

And, certainly, to debar the contract of a moderate gain for the delay of payment upon months prefixed, were to destroy all trade of merchandise. For not many buyers are furnished with ready money, to buy their wares at the port: nor could the sellers make off their commodities so seasonably, as to be ready for further traffic, if they must necessarily be tied to wait upon the hopes of a pecuniary sale; and not left to the common liberty of putting them over to wholesale men, upon trust, who, upon a second trust, distribute them to those, that vent them by retail; both, for days agreed upon: by which means the trade holds up, and the commonwealth enjoys the benefit of a convenient and necessary commerce: a practice, that is now so habituated amongst all nations into the course of trade, that it cannot well consist without it; so as nothing is more ordinary in experience, than that those, who are able to pay down ready money for their wares, know to expect a better pennyworth, than those, that run upon trust. And there may be just reason for this difference: for the present money received enables the seller to a further improvement of his stock, which lies, for the time, dead in the hands that take day for their payment.

So, then, it is not mere time, that is here set to sale, which were odious in any Christian to bargain for: but there are two incidents into this practice, which may render it not unwarrantable.

The one, is the hazard of the sum agreed upon, which too often comes short in the payment; while those subordinate chapmen, into whose hand the gross sum is scattered, turn bankrupts, and

forfeit their trust: so as no small loss is, this way, commonly sustained by the confident seller: in which regard, we are wont to say justly, that "One bird in the hand is worth two in the wood."

The other, is the cessation of that gain, which the merchant might, in the mean time, have made of the sum differed; which might, in likelihood, have been greater than the proportion of the raised price can amount unto.

To which may be added, the foreseen probability of the raising of the market in the interval of payment; the profit whereof is precluded, by this means, to the seller: whose full engagement takes him off, perhaps, from a resolution to have reserved those commodities in his own hands, in expectation of an opportunity of a more profitable utterance, had not the forwardness of the buyer importuned a prevention.

Upon these considerations, if they be serious and unfeigned; I see not why you may not, in a due and moderate proportion, difference your prices according to the delays of payment, without any oppression to the buyer. Howbeit, if any man pleaseth to be so free, as to take no notice of time, but to make future days in his account present, I shall commend his charity, though I dare not press his example as necessary.

The case is equally just, on the behalf of the seller; who, if he be either driven by some emergent necessity, or drawn by the opportunity of a more gainful bargain to call for his money before his day, may justly be required by the late buyer, to abate of the returnable sum, in regard of the prevention of the time covenanted; by reason of the inconvenience or loss whereunto he is put upon the sudden revocation of that money, which is not by agreement payable till the expiration of the time prefixed. But what quantity is to be allowed on the one part, or defalked on the other, is only to be moderated by Christian Charity; and that universal rule, of doing what we would be willing to suffer.

CASE V.

Whether, and how far, monopolies are, or may be lawful.

The most famous Monopoly, that we find in history, is that of Egypt; Gen. xli. 56, 57: wherein the provident patriarch Joseph, out of the foresight of a following dearth, bought up the seven years' grain for Pharaoh, and laid it up in public store-houses; and, in the general scarcity, sold it out to the inhabitants and strangers, with no small advantage: which was so far from unlawful, as that he thereby merited the name of the Saviour of Egypt *. And if any worthy patriot, out of a like providence, shall, beforehand, gather up the commodities of his country into a public magazine, for

* So the Vulgate renders *Zapnath Paaneah*, "*Salvator Mundi*," Gen. xli. 45.

the common benefit and relief of the people, upon the pinch of an ensuing necessity; he is so far out of the reach of censure, as that he well deserves a statue, with the inscription of "Public Benefactor." So as it is not the mere act of monopolizing, that makes the thing unlawful; but the ground and intention, and the manner of carriage.

All monopolies, as they are usually practised, are either such as are allowed by sovereign authority; or privately contrived, by secret plot and convention, for a peculiar gain to some special persons.

If the first, it must be considered, upon what reason that privilege is granted, and upon what terms. If both these be just, the grant can be no other. For, first, it may not be denied, that supreme authority, whether of princes or states, hath power to grant such privileges where they shall find just cause; and, secondly, that there may be very just motives of granting them to some capable and worthy persons: I should be ashamed to imagine, that either of these should need any probation. Doubtless, then, there is manifest equity, that, where there hath been some great merit, or charge, or danger in the compassing of some notable work for a common good, the undertaker should be rewarded with a patent for a secured profit to himself. As put the case some well-minded printer, as one of the Stephens, is willing to be at an excessive charge in the fair publication of a learned and useful work, for the benefit of the present and following ages: it is most just, that he should, from the hands of princes or states, receive a privilege for the sole impression; that he may recover, with advantage, the deep expence he hath been at: otherwise, some interloper may, perhaps, underhand fall upon the work at a lower rate, and undo the first editor; whose industry, care, and cost shall thus be recompensed with the ruin of himself and his posterity: as were too easy to instance. If a man have, by notable dexterity of wit and art, and much labour and charge, after many experiments, attained to the skill of making some rare engine of excellent use for the service of his prince and country; as some singular water-work, or some beneficial instrument for the freeing of navigable rivers from their sandy obstructions; it is all the reason in the world, that, by the just bounty of princes, he should be so far remunerated, as that he alone may receive a patent of enjoying a due profit of his own invention. But, how far it may be lawful for a prince, not only to gratify a well-deserving subject, with the fee of his own device, but with a profit arising from the sole sale of marketable commodities through his kingdom; or, whether, and how far, in the want of moneys, for the necessary service of his state, he may, for the public use, raise, set, or sell monopolies of that kind; is diversely agitated by Casuists; and must receive answer, according to the absoluteness or limitation of those governments, under which they are practised: but with this, that, where this is done, there may be great care had of a just price to be set upon the commodities so restrained, that they be not left to the lawless will of a privileged co-

grosser; nor heightened to an undue rate, by reason of a particular indulgence.

This may be enough, for Authoritative Monopolies.

The common sort of offensive practices this way are Private, and single; or conventional, and plotted by combination. The former, as when some covetous extortioner, out of the strength of his purse, buys up the whole lading of the ship, that he may have the sole power of the wares to sell them at pleasure, which there is no fear but he will do with rigour enough: the true judgment of which action, and the degrees of the malignity of it, must be fetched, as from the mind, so from the management of the buyer; as being so much more sinful, as it partakes more of oppression. The latter, when some brethren in evil conspire to prevent the harvest, to buy up or hoard up the grain; with a purpose to starve the market, and to hatch up a dearth: a damnable practice, in both kinds; and that, which hath, of old, been branded with a curse: neither less full of injustice, than uncharitableness; and that, which cries aloud for a just punishment and satisfactory restitution. I cannot, therefore, but marvel at the opinion of learned Lessius, which he fathers also upon Molina, that too favourably minces the heinousness of this sin; bearing us in hand, that it is indeed an offence against charity and common profit, but not against particular justice: His reason:— "To buy that corn," saith he, "could not be against justice, for he bought it at the current price; nor yet to sell it could be against justice, because he was not tied, out of justice, at that time to bring it forth to sale:" when he might easily have considered, that it is not the mere act of buying, or of not selling, that, in itself, is accused for unjust; but, to buy, or not to sell, with an intention and issue of oppressing others, and undue enriching themselves by a dearth: for what can be more unjust, than for a man to endeavour to raise himself, by the affamishing of others? Neither can it serve his turn to say, by way of excuse, that the multitude of buyers may be the cause of a dearth, and yet without sin: since they do rather occasion, than cause a scarcity; and are so far from intending a dearth in making their market, that they deprecate it, as their great affliction. And if, by his own confession, those, who, either by force or fraud, hinder the importation of corn, that a dearth may continue, are guilty of injustice, and are bound to make restitution, both to the commonwealth in giving cause to raise the price, as also to the merchant whom they have hindered of his meet gain; how can those be liable to a less sin or punishment, that either buy up or wilfully keep in their grain, with a purpose to begin and hold on a dearth? and what less can it be, than force or fraud, that, by their crafty and cruel prevention, the poor are necessitated to want that sustenance, whereby their life should be maintained?

Wise Solomon shall shut up this scene for me. *He, that withholds corn, the people shall curse him; but blessings shall be upon the head of him, that selleth it.* Prov. xi. 26.

CASE VI.

Whether, and how far, doth a fraudulent bargain bind me to performance?

How far, in matter of law, you must advise with other counsel; but, for matter of conscience, take this:—

Is the fraud actively yours, done by you to another? or else passively put by another upon you?

If the former, you are bound to repent and satisfy; either by rescinding the match, or by making amends for the injury.

If the latter, wherein did the fraud lie?

If in the main substance of the thing sold, the bargain is, both by the very law of nature, and in conscience, void; yea, indeed, not at all: as if a man have sold you copper lace, for gold; or alchymy-plate, for silver. The reason is well given by Casuists *: There is no bargain, without a consent; and here is no consent at all, while both parties pitch not upon the same subject: the buyer propounds to himself gold and silver; the seller obtrudes copper and alchymy: the one, therefore, not buying what the other pretended to sell, here is no bargain made, but a mere act of cozenage, justly liable to punishment by all laws of God and man.

But, if the fraud were only in some circumstances, as in some faulty condition of the thing sold not before discerned, or in the over-prizing of the commodity bought; the old rule is *Caveat emptor*. You must, for ought I know, hold you to your bargain. But, if that faulty condition be of so high a nature, that it mars the commodity, and makes it useless to the buyer, the seller, being conscious of the fault, is injurious in the transaction; and is bound, in conscience, to make satisfaction: and, if he have willingly overreached you in the price, in a considerable proportion is guilty of oppression.

It is very memorable, in this kind, that Cicero † relates to us, of a fraudulent bargain, betwixt Canius, a Roman knight and orator, and one Pythius, a banker of Syracuse. Canius, coming upon occasion of pleading to the city of Syracuse, took a great liking to the place; and, settling there, gave out that he had a great desire to buy some one of those pleasant gardens, wherewith, it seems, that city abounded; that he might there recreate himself, when he pleased, with his friends. Pythius, a crafty merchant, hearing of it, sends word to Canius, that he had a fair garden, which he had no mind to sell; but, if he pleased to make use of it for his solace, he might command it as his own; and, withal, courteously invites Canius to sup with him there, the day following. In the mean time, being a man by reason of his trade of exchange very gracious in the city, he calls the fishermen together, and desires them, that the next evening they would fish in the stream before his garden.

* Lessius, l. ii. c. 17. dub. 5. † Cicer. de Offic. l. iii. Sect. 59.

and bring him what they shall have caught. Canius, in due time, comes, according to the invitation, to supper: where there was delicate provision made for him by Pythius; and store of boats bringing in their plentiful draughts of fish, and casting them down at the feet of Pythius. Canius asks the reason of this concourse of fishermen, and store of proffered provision. Pythius tells him, "This is the commodity and privilege of the place: if Syracuse yield any fish, here it is caught, and here tendered." Canius, believing the report, importunes his host to sell him the ground: the owner, after some seeming lothness and squeamish relactation, at last yields to gratify him with the bargain. The dear price is paid down, with much eagerness. The new master of the place, in much pride of his purchase, the next day repairs early to his garden, invites his friends to a Friday feast; and, finding no boat there, asks the neighbour whether it were holiday with the fishermen, that he saw none of them there. "No," said the good man, "none that I know: but none of the trade use to fish here; and I much marvelled at the strange confluence of their boats here, yesterday." The Roman Orator was down in the mouth; finding himself thus cheated by the money-changer: but, for ought I see, had his amends in his hands. He meant and desired to buy the place, though without any such accommodation; but over-bought it, upon the false pretence of an appendant commodity. The injury was the seller's: the loss must be the buyer's.

But, if such be the case, that you are merely drawn in by the fraud, and would not have bought the commodity at all, if you had not been induced by the deceit, and false oaths, and warrants of the seller; you have just reason, either, if you may, to fall off from the bargain; or, if the matter be valuable, to require a just satisfaction from the seller; who is bound in conscience, either by annulling the bargain, or abatement of price, to make good your indemnity.

In these matters of contract, there is great reason to distinguish, betwixt a willing deceit and an involuntary wrong. If a man shall fraudently sell a horse, which he knows secretly and incurably diseased, to another for sound; and that other, believing the seller's deep protestation, shall, upon the same price, *bonâ fide*, put him off to me; I feel myself injured: but whither shall I go for an amends? I cannot challenge the immediate seller; for he deceived me not: I cannot challenge the deceiver; for he dealt not with me. In human laws, I am left remediless; but, in the law of conscience, the first seller, who ought to have borne his own burthen of an inevitable loss, is bound to transfer, by the hands that sold me that injurious bargain, a due satisfaction.

Neither is it other in the fraudulent conveyances of houses or land. However the matter may be intricated, by passing through many, perhaps unknowing hands; yet the sin, and obligation to satisfaction, will necessarily lie at the first door: whence if just restitution do not follow, the seller may purchase Hell to boot.

Think not now, on this discourse, that the only fraud is in sell-

ing. There may be no less, though not so frequent fraud, in buying also: whether, in unjust payment, by false coin; or, by injustice of quantities, as in buying by weights or measures, above allowance; or, by wrong valuation of the substance and quality of the commodity, misknown by the seller. As for instance, a simple man, as I have known it done in the western parts, finds a parcel of ambergris cast upon the sands: he, perceiving it to be some unctious matter, puts it to the base use of his shoes, or his cart-wheel: a merchant, that smells the worth of the stuff, buys it of him for a small sum; giving him a shilling or two for that, which himself knows to be worth twenty pounds: the bargain is fraudulent, and requires a proportionable compensation to the ignorant seller, into whose hands Providence hath cast so rich a booty.

Shortly, in all these intercourses of trade, that old and just rule, which had wont to sway the traffic of Heathens, must much more take place amongst Christians; *Cum bonis benè agier:* "That honest men must be honestly dealt with:" and, therefore, that all fraud must be banished out of their markets; or, if it dares to intrude, soundly punished, and mulcted with a due satisfaction.

CASE VII.

How far, and when, am I bound to make restitution of another man's goods remaining in my hand?

RESTITUTION is a duty, no less necessary, than rarely practised amongst Christians. The arch-publican, Zaccheus, knew that with this he must begin his conversion: and that known rule of St. Austin is in every man's mouth; "No remission without restitution*." For this act is no small piece of commutative justice, which requires that every man should have his own: most just, therefore, it is, that what you have taken or detained from the true owner should be restored; neither can it be sufficient, that you have conceived a dry and bootless sorrow for your wrongful detention, unless you also make amends to him by a real compensation.

But you are disabled to make restitution, by reason of want: your will is good; but the necessity, into which you are fallen, makes you uncapable of performance:—See, first, that it be a true, and not feigned necessity. Many a one, like to lewd cripples that pretend false sores, counterfeit a need that is not; and shelter themselves in a willing jail, there living merrily upon their defrauded creditor, whom they might honestly satisfy by a well improved liberty: this case is damnably unjust. But, if it be a true necessity of God's making, it must excuse you for the time; till the same hand, that did cast you down, shall be pleased to raise you up again: then, you are bound to satisfy; and, in the mean time, lay the case truly before your creditor, who, if he be not merciless,

* Aug. Epis. 54. ad Macedon.

where he sees a real desire and endeavour of satisfaction, will imitate his God in accepting the will for the deed, and wait patiently for the recovery of your estate.

You ask now, to whom you should tender restitution:—

To whom, but the owner? "But he," you say, "is dead." That will not excuse you: he lives still in his heirs. It is memorable, though in a small matter, which Seneca reports of a Pythagorean Philosopher at Athens; who, having run upon the score for his shoes at a shop there, hearing that the shoemaker was dead, at first was glad to think the debt was now paid; but, straight recollecting himself, he says within himself, "Yet, howsoever, the shoemaker lives still to thee, though dead to others;" and, thereupon, puts his money into the shop, as supposing that both of them would find an owner. It is a rare case, that a man dies, and leaves no body in whom his right survives. But, if there be neither heir, nor executor, nor administrator, nor assign, *The poor*, saith our Saviour, *ye shall have always with you*: make thou them his heir: turn your debt into alms.

Object. "But, alas!" you say, "I am poor myself: what need I then look forth for any other? Why may not I employ my restitution to the relief of my own necessity?"—

Sol. It is dangerous, and cannot be just, for a man to be his own carver altogether, in a business of this nature. You must look upon this money, as no more yours than a stranger's: and, howsoever it be most true, that every man is nearest to himself, and hath reason to wish to be a sharer, where the need is equal; yet it is fit this should be done, with the knowledge and approbation of others. Your pastor, and those other that are by authority interested in these public cares, are fit to be acquainted with the case. If it be in a matter meet to be notified, as a business of debt or pecuniary engagement, let their wisdom proportion the distribution: but, if it be in the case of some secret crime, as of theft or cozenage, which you would keep as close as your own heart, the restitution must be charged upon your conscience; to be made with so much more impartiality, as you desire it more to be concealed: herein have a care of your soul, whatever becomes of your estate.

As for the time of restitution, it is easily determined, that it cannot well be too soon, for the discharge of your conscience: it may be too late, for the occasions of him to whom it is due. Although it may fall out, that it may prove more fit to defer, for the good of both: wherein charity and justice must be called in as arbitrators. The owner calls for his money, in a riotous humour; to mis-spend it upon his unlawful pleasure: if your delay may prevent the mischief, the forbearance is an act of mercy. The owner calls for a sword deposited with you, which you have cause to suspect he means to make use of for some ill purpose: your forbearing to restore it is so both charitable and just, that your act of delivery of it may make you accessary to a murder. Whereto I may add, that, in the choice of the time, you may lawfully have some respect to yourself: for, if the present restitution should be to your utter un-

doing, which may be avoided by some reasonable delay, you have no reason to shun another's inconvenience by your own inevitable ruin: in such case, let the creditor be acquainted with the necessity, his offence deprecated; and rather put yourself upon the mercy of a chancery, than be guilty of your own overthrow.

But, when the power is in your hand, and the coast every way clear, let not another man's goods or money stick to your fingers; and think not that your head can long lie easily, upon another man's pillow.

"Yea, but," you say, "the money or goods miscarried, either by robbery or false trust, ere you could employ them to any profit at all:"—This will not excuse you: after they came into your power, you are responsible for them. What compassion this may work in the good nature of the owner for the favour of an abatement, must be left to his own breast: your tie to restitution is not the less; for, it is supposed, had they remained in the owner's hands they had been safe. If it were not your fault, yet it was your cross, that they miscarried; and who should bear your cross, but yourself?

Shortly, then, after all pretences of excuse; the charge of wise Solomon must be obeyed: *Withhold not good from the owners thereof, when it is in the power of thy hand to do it*; Prov. iii. 27.

CASE VIII.

Whether, and how far, doth a promise, extorted by fear, though seconded by an oath, bind my conscience to performance?

A MERE promise, is an honest man's strong obligation; but, if it be withal backed with an oath, the bond is sacred and inviolable.

But, let me ask you what promise it is, that you thus made and bound.

If it be of a thing unlawful to be done, your promise, and oath, is so far from binding you to performance, that it binds you only to repentance that ever you made it. In this case, your performance would double and heighten your sin: it was ill, to promise; but it would be worse, to perform. Herod is, by oath, engaged, for an indefinite favour to Salome: she pitches upon John Baptist's head: he was sorry for such a choice; yet, for his oath's sake, he thinks he must make it good: surely, Herod was ill-principled, that he could think a rash oath must bind him to murder an innocent: he might have truly said, this was more than he could do: for that we can do, which we can lawfully do.

But, if it be a lawful thing that you have thus promised and sworn, though the promise were unlawfully drawn from you by fear, I dare not persuade you to violate it.

It is true, that divers learned Casuists hold, that a promise drawn from a man by fear is void, or at least revokable at pleasure;

and so also the oath annexed, which follows the nature of the act whereto it appends: chiefly upon this ground, that both these are done without consent, mere involuntary acts; since nothing can be so contrary to consent as force and fear.

But I dare not go along with them: for that I apprehend there is not an absolute involuntariness in this engagement, but a mixed one; such as the Philosopher * determines in the Mariner, that cast his goods overboard to save his life: in itself, he hath no will to do it; but, here and now, upon this danger imminent, he hath a half-will to perform it.

Secondly, I build upon their own ground. There is the same reason, they say, of force and of fraud:

Now, that a promise and oath drawn from us by fraud binds strongly, we need no other instance than that of Joshua, made to the Gibeonites. There could not be a greater fraud, than lay hid in the old shoes, thread-bare garments, rent bottles, and mouldy provisions of those borderers; who, under the pretence of a remote nation, put themselves under the interest and protection of Israel; Josh. ix. 12, 13. &c. The guile soon proved apparent: yet durst not Joshua, though he found himself cheated into this covenant, fall off from the league made with them; which when, after many ages, Saul out of politic ends went about to have broken, we see how fearfully it was avenged with a grievous plague of famine upon Israel, even in David's days; 2 Sam. xxi. 1. who was no way accessary to the oppression: neither could be otherwise expiated, than by the bleeding of Saul's bloody house.

When once we have interested God in the business, it is dangerous not to be punctual in the performance. If, therefore, a bold thief, taking you at an advantage, have set his dagger to your breast; and, with big oaths, threatened to stab you, unless you promise and swear to give him a hundred pounds, to be left on such a day in such a place for him; I see not how, if you be able, you can dispence with the performance: the only help is, (which is well suggested by Lessius †, that nothing hinders why you may not, when you have done, call for it back again, as unjustly extorted: and, truly, we are beholden to the Jesuit, for so much of a real equivocation: why should you not thus right yourself, since you have only tied yourself to a mere payment of the sum? upon staking it down for him, you are free. But, if he have forced you to promise and swear not to make him known, you are bound to be silent in this act, concerning yourself: but, withal, if you find that your silence may be prejudicial to the public good; for that you perceive the licentiousness of the offender proceeds, and is like so to do, to the like mischief unto others; you ought, though not to accuse him for the fact done unto you, yet to give warning to some in authority to have a vigilant eye upon so lewd a person, for the prevention of any further villainy.

But, if it be in a business, whose peril rests only in yourself, the

* Arist. Eth. l. ii. c. 2. † Lessius de Jure, &c. l. ii. c. 42. dub. 6 :

matter being lawful to be done, your promise and oath, though forced from you, must hold you close to performance, notwithstanding the inconveniencies that attend. If, therefore, you are dismissed upon your parole, for a certain time, to return home, and dispose of your affairs, and then to yield yourself again prisoner to an enemy; the obligation is so strict and firm, that no private respects may take it off: and it should be a just shame to you, that a Pagan* should, out of common honesty, hold himself bound to his word; not without the danger of torment and death: when you, that are a Christian, slip away from your oath.

CASE IX.

Whether those monies or goods, which I have found, may be safely taken and kept by me to my own use.

It is well distinguished, by Sotus, out of Aquinas*, That those things, which may be found, are either such, as call no man master, as some pearl, or precious stone, or ambergris lying upon the shore; or, such, as have an owner, but unknown to us; or, as we may add, to make up the number complete, such, as whose owner we know.

Where the true owner is known, speedy restitution must follow: otherwise, the detention is in the next door to theft.

Where the commodity found hath no owner, it justly falls to the right of the first finder: for both the place and the thing are masterless *(adespota)* and common; offering themselves to the next comer.

The only difficulty is, in those things, which have an unknown owner. And, certainly, common justice, and honesty, suggests to us, that we may not seize on commodities of this kind, as absolutely our own. The casualty of their mis-laying, doth not alter their propriety: they are still his, that lost them; though out of his sight, yet not out of his right: and even natural justice would give every man his own.

The Laws both Civil, and Canon, and Municipal do sufficiently guide our practice, in many particular cases of this nature; and our Conscience must lead us to follow them.

If they be quick commodities; as horses, sheep, kine, and the like, which we call Waifs and Strays; every one knows they are to be publicly impounded, that, upon search, the owner may be the surer to find them: and if he come not in, the sooner, to be openly cried in several markets, that the noise of his own neglected goods may come to his ear: and if, upon a continuing silence, they be put into the custody of the Lord of the Manor, who is most likely to be responsible, and he shall make use of them before his year and day be expired, he shall not do it without some mark of

* Attilius Regulus. † Dom. Sot. de Jure et Justit. l. v. q. 3. page 436.

distinction; that yet the true owner may know, they are not challenged by the present possessor as his own, but lie open to the just claim of their true master.

But, if they be dead commodities; as a jewel, a purse, or some ring of price, or the like; the finder may not presently smother up the propriety of it in his own coffer. His heart tells him, that the mere accident of his finding it, cannot alienate the just right of it from the true owner: he is, therefore, bound in conscience, in an honest sincerity to use all good means, for the finding out of the right proprietary; whether by secret inquiry, or open publication: and if, after due inquisition, no claim shall be made to it for the present, he shall reserve it in his hand, in expectation of a just challenge; upon the assurance whereof, how late soever, he is bound to restore it to the proper owner: who, on the other side, shall fail in his duty of gratitude, if he return not some meet acknowledgment of that good office and fidelity.

In all which mutual carriages, we ought to be guided by those respects, which we could wish tendered to ourselves in the like occasions.

Mean while, in all the time of our custody, we are to look upon those commodities as strangers; making account of such a potential right only in them, as we are ready and desirous to resign to the hands that purchased and lost them.

On the contrary, no words can express the horrible cruelty and injustice, that is wont to be done in this kind, not only on our shores, but in other nations also, upon the shipwrecked goods, both of strangers and our own compatriots; while, instead of compassioning and relieving the loss and miseries of our distressed brethren, every man is ready to run upon the spoil; and, as if it were from some plundered enemy, is eagerly busy in carrying away what riches soever come to hand; which they falsely and injuriously term "God's grace," when as indeed it is no other than the Devil's booty. This practice can pass for no other than a mere robbery: so much more heinous, as the condition of the mis-carried owner is more miserable. What a foul inhumanity is this, to *persecute him, whom God hath smitten;* and, upon no other quarrel, to be cruel to our brother, than because the sea hath been merciless!

Dear Countrymen, ye especially of the West, leave these abominable pillages to savage nations, that know not God: and, putting on the bowels of tender compassion, lend your best succour, rather for the rescue of poor wrecked souls; and safely preserving that small residue of their drowned freight, which you cannot imagine that the sea hath therefore forborne to swallow, that you might.

CASE X.

Whether I may lawfully buy those goods, which I shall strongly suspect or know to be stolen or plundered; or, if I have ignorantly bought such goods, whether I may lawfully, after knowledge of their owner, keep them as mine.

To buy those goods, which you know or have just cause to suspect to be stolen or plundered, is no better than to make yourself accessary to the theft; if you do it with an intention to possess them as your own: for, what do you else herein, but *ex-post-facto* partake with that thief, who stole them; and encourage him in his lewd practices? since, according to the old word, "If there were no receivers, there would be no thieves."

Neither will it serve the turn, that, in the case of plunder, there may seem a pretence of justice; in that this is pleaded, perhaps, to be done by some colour of authority: for, certainly, where there is not law, there can be no justice; whereof law is the only rule. Whatever, then, is against an established law, in matter of right possession, can be no other than unjust. Take heed; therefore, lest that heavy challenge of the Almighty be, upon this bargain, charged upon you; *When thou sawest a thief, thou consentedst with him;* Ps. l. 18. These stolen waters may be sweet in the mouth, but they will be poison in the maw; and, like the water of a just jealousy, rottenness to the belly.

But if, as these ill-gotten goods are lightly cheap penny-worths, you buy them only with an intention to gratify the true owner, with an easy purchase of his own, which would perhaps else be unrecoverable; while your profession to do it for no other end takes off the scandal, I cannot but allow your act, and commend your charity.

But if, making use of that rule which St. Paul gives for meat, in bargaining for any other commodities, you shall extend your liberty to whatsoever is sold in the market; and shall, in the exercise of that freedom, upon a just and valuable consideration, ignorantly buy those goods, which you afterward hear and know to be another's; the contract is, on your part, valid and faultless, since your invincible want of knowledge acquits you from any guilt of consent. But, withal, there is an after-game to be played by you: you are bound, upon just notice, to acquaint the true owner with the matter; and to proffer yourself ready to join with him, in the prosecution of law or justice upon the offender, and upon a meet satisfaction to tender him his own.

But, if the theft be only on probability, and it be doubtful whether the goods belong to the owner notified to you, your duty is

to make diligent inquiry into the business; and if, upon due inquisition, you find too much likelihood of the theft, I dare not advise you, with some Casuists, to reverse the bargain, and to return the commodity to those false hands that purloined it: but rather to call the probable owner; and, with him, to appeal unto just authority, for a more full examination of the right, and an award answerable to justice; but, if there appear no good grounds for an impeachment, you may peaceably sit down in the possession, till further evidence may convince your judgment in the contrary.

RESOLUTIONS.

THE SECOND DECADE.

CASES OF LIFE AND LIBERTY.

CASE I.

Whether, and in what cases, it may be lawful for a man to take away the life of another.

How light a matter soever it may seem to the world, now long soaked in blood, a man's life is most precious; and may not, but upon the weightiest of all causes, be either taken or given away.

The Great God hath reserved to himself this prerogative, to be the only absolute Lord of it: neither can any creature have power to command it; but those only, to whom he hath committed it, by special deputation: nor they neither, by any independent or illimited authority; but according as it is regulated by just laws: to call for a man's life merely out of will, is no other than a Turkish tyranny.

Now the same God, that hath ordained sovereign powers to judge of and protect the life of others, hath given weighty charge to every man, to tender and manage his own; which binds him to use all just means for his own preservation, although it should be the necessitated destruction of another.

Let us see, therefore, how far, and in what cases, man, that is always appointed to be master of his own life, may be also master of another man's.

That public justice may take away the life of heinous malefactors, is sufficiently known, to be not lawful only, but required; and, indeed, so necessary, that without it there were no living at all amongst men.

That, in a just war, the life of an open enemy may be taken away, is no less evident.

The only question is, of private men, in their own cases.

And, here, we need not doubt to say, that even a private man, being mortally assaulted, may, in his own defence, lawfully kill another. I suppose the assault mortal; when both the weapon is

deadly, and the fury of the assailant threatens death. As for some slight and sudden passages of a switch or a cane, they come not under this consideration; although those small affronts offered to eminent persons, prove oftentimes to be quarrels no less than mortal. But, even in these assaults, except the violence be so too impetuous that it will admit of neither parley nor pause, there ought to be, so much as may consist with our necessary safety, a tender regard and endeavour to avoid the spilling of blood; but, if neither persuasion, nor the shifting (what we may) our station, can abate any thing of the rage of the assailer, death must: yea, if not my brother only, but my father, or my son, should, in this forcible manner, set upon me; howsoever I should hazard the award of some blows, and with tears beg a forbearance, yet, if there would be no remedy, nature must pardon me: no man can be so near me as myself.

I cannot, therefore, subscribe to the counsel of Leonardus Lessius *, abetting some ancient Casuists, and pretended to be countenanced by some Fathers, that it were meet for Clerical and Religious persons, rather to suffer death, than to kill a murderer: since no reason can be shewed, why their life should not be as dear to them as others; or why they should be exempted from the common law of nature; or why their sacred hands should be more stained with the foul blood of a wicked man-slayer, justly shed, than any others'. I am sure, Phineas thought not so; nor Samuel, after him; and, which is most of all, that the honour and privileges of the Sons of Levi were both procured and feoffed on them, upon an enjoined bloodshed.

Only here is the favour and mercy of that learned Casuist, that Clerks and Votaries are not always bound rather to die, than kill: "For," saith he †, "if such a religious person should bethink himself, that he is in a deadly sin; and should, thereupon, fear that he should be damned, if he were killed in that woeful and desperate estate; he were then bound, by all means to defend himself, and to prefer the safety of his own soul, before the life of another." As if nothing but the fear of damnation, could warrant a man for his own safeguard: as if nothing but the danger of hell, could authorize a holy person to be his own guardian: as if the best of lives were so cheap and worthless, that they might be given away for nothing: whereas, contrarily, *Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of all his saints;* Ps. cxvi. 15.

But in such a case, according to the opinion of this great Casuist ‡, charity to ourselves doth not more arm and enforce our hand, than charity to our neighbour holds it, and binds it up: we may not kill, lest the manslayer, dying in the attempt of this murder, should everlastingly perish. Surely, I cannot but admire this unreasonable mercy in a Father of the Society. Where was this consideration, when so many thousands of innocent persons were doomed to be

* Less. de Jur. &c. l. ii. c. 9. dubit. 8. Ex Antonio et Sylvestr. &c.
† Ibid. paragr. ult. ‡ Less. ibid.

blown up in a state of impenitence; whose unrepented heresy must needs have sent them up instantly to their hell?

By this reason, a malefactor, if he be obdured in his sin, and professeth to be remorseless, may not feel the stroke of justice.

Shortly, then, if a man will needs be wicked to my destruction, the evil is his own: let him bear his own guilt; let me look to my own indemnity.

The case is yet more difficult, where the attempt is not upon my person, but my goods. If a man will be offering to rob my house, or to take my purse, what may I do in this case? Surely, neither charity nor justice can dissuade me from resisting: the laws of God and man will allow me to defend my own: and if, in this resistance, the thief or burglayer miscarry, his blood will be upon his own head: although, in the mean time, charity forbids that this slaughter should be first in my intention; which is primarily bent upon my own safety, and the vindication of my own just property. The blood, that follows, is but the unwilling attendant of my defence: of the shedding whereof, God is so tender, that he ordained it only to be inoffensively done in a nightly robbery; Exod. xxii. 2, 3. where the purpose of the thief is likely to be more murderous, and the act more uncapable of restitution.

What, then, if the thief, after his robbery done, ceasing any further danger of violence, shall betake himself to his heels, and run away with my money?—In such a case, if the sum be so considerable, as that it much imports my estate, however our municipal laws may censure it, with which, of old, even a killing, *se defendendo*, was no less than felony of death *: my conscience should not strike me, if I pursue him with all might; and, in hot chase, so strike him, as that, by this means, I disable him from a further escape, for the recovery of my own: and if, hereupon, his death shall follow, however I should pass with men, God and my own heart would acquit me.

Neither doubt I to say the like may be done, upon a forcible attempt of the violation of the chastity of either sex: a case long adjudged by the doom of nature itself, in Marius, the General of the Roman Army, as Cicero tells us †, clearly acquitting a young man for killing a Colonel, that would have forced him in this kind.

But I may not assent to Dominicus Bannez, Petrus Navarrus, and Cajetan ‡, though grave authors; who hold, that, if a man go about, upon false and deadly criminations, to suborn witnesses against me, to accuse me to a corrupted judge, with a purpose to take away my life, in a colour of justice, if I have no other way to avoid the malice, I may lawfully kill him. It were a woeful and dangerous case, if every man might be allowed to carve himself of justice. Mere accusations are no convictions. How know I, what God may work for me, on the Bench or at the Bar? what evidence he may raise, to clear me? what confusion or contradiction,

* Dalton. p. 244. † Orat. pro Mil. ‡ Bann. q. 64. a. 7. dub. 2. Nav. l. ii. c. 3. Less. l. ii. de Just. &c. c. 9. dub. 8.

he may cause in the mouths of the hired witnesses? what change he may work in the judge? what interposition of higher powers? There is a Providence in this case to be relied upon, which can and will bring about his own holy purposes, without our presumptuous and unwarrantable undertakings.

CASE II.

Whether may I lawfully make use of a duel, for the deciding of my right, or the vindication of mine honour?

I HAVE long ago spent my opinion upon this point, in a large epistolar discourse *, which I find no reason to alter. Thither, I might refer you, to spare my labour; but lest, perhaps, that should not be at hand, shortly thus:—

The sword, in a private hand, was never ordained to be a decider of any controversies; save this one, whether of the two is the better fencer: nor yet that always; since *The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong;* as Solomon hath observed; Eccl. ix. 11.

It can be no better, therefore, than a mere tempting of God, as Rodriguez justly censures it †, to put ourselves or our cause upon so unwarranted a trial.

I find but two practices of it in the records of Scripture.

The one, that famous challenge of Goliath, which that proud Philistine had not made, if he had not presumed of his giantly strength and stature, so utterly unmatchable by all Israel (1 Sam. xvii. 24.), that the whole host was ready to give back upon his appearance. He knew the advantage so palpable, that none would dare to undertake the quarrel: and had still gone on to triumph over that trembling army, had not God's inexpected champion, by divine instinct, taken up the monster, and vanquished him; leaving all but his head to bedung that earth, which had lately shaken at his terror.

The other was in that mortal quarrel betwixt Joab and Abner, on the behalf of their two masters, David and Ishbosheth; 2 Sam. ii. 14: wherein Abner invites his rival in honour to a tragical play, as he terms it, a monomachy of twelve single combatants, on either part; which was so acted, that no man went victor away from that bloody theatre.

Only it is observable, that, in both these conflicts, still the challengers had the worst.

In imitation of which latter, I cannot allow that, which I find frequently done in the managing of public hostility; that some confident cavalier, out of mere bravery of spirit craves leave to put himself forth before both armies; and, as in way of preface to an ensuing battle, bids defiance to any antagonist: an act of more va-

* See Epistles, Decade iv. Ep. 2. EDITOR.

† Rodrig. Sum. cas. Tom. i. cap. 73.

lour than judgment; whereof the undertaking is void of warrant, and the issue (lightly) of success: while it pleaseth God, commonly, to punish presumption with a foil; and the ominous miscarriage of one, proves a sad discouragement to many.

And, if single fortitude be not triable this way, much less justice, in causes litigious. To make the sword arbiter of such differences, were no better than to revive the old Ordalian trial, used by our Heathen Ancestors: since God hath no more ordained, nor promised, to bless the one than the other. And reason itself tells us, in how ill a condition that righteous cause is, which must be carried by the sharper weapon, the stronger arm, the skilfuller fencer.

Now, whereas there are two acts, as introductions into the field, a challenge and an acceptation; both of them have their guilt: but the former so much more, as it hath in it more provocation to evil.

I cannot, therefore, but wonder at and cry down the opinion of Bannez and Cajetan, that a man, slandered by an unjust accuser, may justly challenge him the field, and vindicate himself by the sword: a doctrine, which, if it were allowed and accordingly practised, besides that it would destroy the course of justice and wrest revenge out of the hands of the Almighty, were enough to make the world an Aceldama: for, who would not be his own judge, for the accusation; and his own executioner for the revenge?

There may yet seem more innocence in the acceptation; which makes shew of a mere passive nature, and appears to be extorted by the insolence of a provoking adversary: whose pressures are wont to receive such construction, as that the challenged party refusing, upon what ground soever, is, in the vulgar opinion, proclaimed for base and recreant; and I must needs confess, the irritation diminisheth the offence. But, withal, however the Spanish and Italian Casuists, whose nations are wont to stand a little too highly upon the points of a mis-called honour, are wont to pass fair interpretations of the matter, I cannot but find it deeply guilty also: for, what is this other, than a consent to sin by engaging in blood? which, by a man wise and conscionable, might be turned off with a just contempt, without imputation of cowardice; since the plea of conscience is able to bear down the vain fancies of idle sword-men: or, if that will not be taken, the false blurs, that are cast upon a worthy man's reputation by vulgar breath, deserve no entertainment but scorn: or, lastly, other means lie open to both parts, for the proof of a questioned valour, which, in a lawful way, the challenged is ready to embrace. He walks, not unprovided, about the business of his calling: if he be fairly set upon, on equal terms, he shall make no doubt to defend himself: but, to make a formal business of a quarrel on either part, and to agree upon a bargain of blood-shedding, is wicked and damnable; and, though both should come fairly off, yet the very intention to kill is murder.

This case is so clear, that the Council of Trent * hath thought

* Conc. Tr. Sess. 25. Rodriguez. Tom. 1. c. 72. de Duello.

fit to denounce heavy sentences, and inflict sharp censures, upon Emperors, Kings, States, and Potentates, that shall give allowance to duels within their dominions; pronouncing them, *ipso jure*, excommunicate; and depriving them of those towns, cities, lands, if held of the Church, where such unlawful acts are made: and that those, who either act or patronize, and by their presence assist, countenance, or abet such combats, shall incur the sentence of excommunication, the loss of all their goods, and perpetual infamy; and, if they die in such quarrel, shall, as self-murderers, be debarred the privilege of Christian burial.

Briefly, therefore, neither your justice nor your honour may depend upon the point of private swords; and, if there can be no other remedy, you must rather suffer in either, than hazard your soul.

CASE III.

Whether may it be lawful, in case of extremity, to procure the abortion of the child, for the preservation of the mother?

I FEAR want of true judgment renders too many of the weaker sex grossly culpable, in matter of willing abortion; while, being not well principled either in nature or grace, they think it not unlawful, or at least venially so, whether out of the fear of painful childbirth or for the avoidance of too great a charge, to prevent the fulness of their conceptions: and, therefore, either by over vehement motion or unwholsome medicine, are not unwilling to forestal nature; and to free themselves early of that, which might, in time, prove their burden. Wherein they little know, how highly they offend the Majesty of God, in destroying his potential creature; and how heavy weight of guilt they lay upon their souls, while they endeavour to give an undue ease to their bodies.

Your question supposes an extremity: and, surely, such it had need to be, that may warrant the intention of such an event.

For the deciding whereof, our Casuists are wont to distinguish double; both of the state of the conception, and of the nature of the receipt.

In the former, they consider of the Conception, either as it is before it receive life, or after that it is animated. Before it receive life, they are wont to determine, that, howsoever it were no less than mortal sin in a physician, to prescribe a medicinal receipt to cause abortion, for the hiding of a sin, or any outward secular occasion; yet, for the preservation of the life of the mother, in an extreme danger, (I say, before animation) it might be lawful: But, after life once received, it were a heinous sin to administer any such mortal remedy. The later Casuists are better advised; and justly hold, that to give any such expelling or destructive medicine, with a direct intention to work an aborsement, whether before or after animation, is utterly unlawful and highly sinful. And with them I

cannot but concur in opinion: for, after conception we know that naturally follows animation: there is only the time, that makes the difference; which, in this case, is not so considerable, as to take off a sin; that of Tertullian * comes home to the point, which both Covarruvias and Lessius † urge to this purpose: *Homicidii festinatio est, prohibere nasci:* "It is but a hastening of murder, to hinder that which would be born:" *Homo est, qui futurus est:* "It is a man, that would be so, &c." Upon this ground, we know, that, in a further degree of remoteness, a voluntary self-pollution hath ever been held to have so much guilt in it, as that Angelus Politianus reports it as the high praise of Michael Verrinus, that he would rather die than yield to it ‡: how much more, when there is a further progress made towards the perfection of human life! And, if you tell me, that the life of the mother might thus be preserved, whereas otherwise both she and all the possibilities of further conceptions are utterly lost; I must answer you with that sure and universal rule of the Apostle, That we may not do evil, that good may come thereon; Rom. iii. 8.

The second consideration is, of the nature of the Receipt, and the intention of the prescriber.

There are prescripts, that may, in and of themselves, tend towards cure, and may have ordinarily such an effect; but yet, being used and applied for the mother's remedy, may prove the loss of the conception, being yet inanimate. These, if they be given with no other intention than the preservation of the mother's life, may be capable of excuse: for that the inconvenience, or mischief rather, which followed upon the receipts, was accidental; and utterly against the mind and hopes of him, that advised them.

But, if the conception be once formed and animated, the question will be so much more difficult, as the proceedings of nature are more forward. Whereupon it is, that the Septuagint in their translation, as Lessius well observes §, have rendered that Mosaical law concerning abortions, in these terms: *If a man strike a woman that is with child, and she make an abortion; if the child were formed, he shall give his life for the life of the child: if it were not formed, he shall be punished with a pecuniary mulct to her husband* ‖; Exodus xxi. 22. applying that to the issue, which the Vulgate Latin understands of the mother; and making the supposition to be of a formation and life, which the Latin, more agreeably to the Original, makes to be *death;* and our English, with Castalion ¶, expresses by *mischief:* but whether the mischief be meant of the death of the mother, or of the late living issue, the Scripture hath not declared. Cornelius à Lapide **, taking it expressly of the mother's death, yet draws the judgment out, in an equal length, to the death of the child, once

* Tertul. in Apol. c. 9. † Less. l. ii. c. 9. du. 10. ‡ *Ne se pollueret, mavit ipse mori.* Ex Politiano Gerard. Voss. de Orig. et Progres. Idol. l. iii. c. 18. § Ubi supra. ‖ The Septuagint seem to have taken אסן *death*, for אישון, a diminutive of איש *a man*; as Cornel. a Lapid. probably guesses. ¶ Castal. *Si pernicies non fuerit:* Ours; *If no mischief follow.* ** Cornel. a Lap. in Exod. xxi.

animated: making no difference of the guilt; since the infant's soul is of no less worth, than her's that bears him.

In this case of the conception animated, I find the Casuists much divided.

While some, more tender than their fellows, will not allow, in the utmost extremity of a dying mother, a medicine that may be directly curative to be given her, if it should be with any apparent danger of the child, in case that the child may be probably drawn forth alive: which they do upon this false and bloodily uncharitable ground, that the child, dying without baptism, is liable to eternal damnation; which woeful danger therefore the mother ought to prevent, though with the certain hazard of her own life *. But the foundation of this judgment being unsound (since to doom the children of believing parents inevitably to hell for the want of that, which they are not possibly capable to receive, is too cruel and horrible), the structure must needs totter. These men, while they profess themselves too careful of the soul of the child, which yet may perhaps be safer than their own; seem to be somewhat too hard-hearted to the body of the mother.

Others, more probably, hold, that, if the case be utterly desperate, and it be certain, that both mother and child must undoubtedly perish if some speedy remedy be not had; it may then be lawful to make use of such receipts, as may possibly give some hopes to save the mother, though not without some peril of the child †.

But, all this while, the intentions and endeavours must be no other than preservatory; however it pleaseth God to order the events.

Shortly, no man, that purposely procureth an abortion, as such, can wash his hands from blood: no woman, that wilfully acts or suffers it, however the secresy may exempt her from the danger of human laws, can think to avoid those judgments of the righteous God, which he hath charged upon murderers.

I cannot here, therefore, forbear to give the world notice of the impious indulgence of a late Pope, in this kind. Sixtus Quintus, who in our time sat in the See of Rome, finding the horrible effects of that liberty, which too many, both secular and religious persons, took to themselves in this matter of abortion; in a just detestation of that damnable practice, thought meet, in much fervour of spirit, to set forth his *Bulla Cruciatæ*, than which there was never a more zealous piece published to the world: wherein that Pope pronounces all those, which have any hand in the acting or procuring of this wicked fact, of the ejecting of conceptions, whether animate or inanimate, formed or informed, by potions or medicaments or any other means whatsoever, to have incurred both the crime and punishment of manslaughter; charging due execution to be done upon such persons accordingly: and withal, in a direful manner excommunicates them, and sends them to hell,

* Vel. ut alii, *Quorum animæ certissimè in limbum descendunt sine Baptismo.* Mart. Alphons. Viv. Explan. Bullæ de Abort. † Rodr. Sum. Tom. 1. c. 5. de Abort.

(without repentance); reserving the absolution solely to himself and his successors.

Now comes a late successor of his *, Gregory XIV., who, finding the sentence too unreasonably hard for his petulant and thrifty Italians, and indeed for all loose persons of both sexes, mitigates the matter; and, as a Spanish Casuist expresses it truly, in the very first year of his pontificate, in a certain Constitution of his, dated at Rome, the last day of May, 1591, *delevit censuras, quas Sixtus V. imposuerat contra facientes, procurantes, &c.* "abolished and took off those heavy censures, which Sixtus had imposed; and reduced the terrible punishments, by him ordained to be inflicted, unto a poor bare irregularity; and determines, that any Confessor, allowed by the Ordinary, may absolve from this sin of procured abortion †:" by the slightness of the censure, in effect, animating the sin. An act, well becoming the Mother of Fornications. After all which Pandarism, let all good Christians know and resolve the crime, to be no less than damnable.

But, withal, let me advise you, with Martinus Vivaldus ‡, that what I have herein written against the procurers of abortions, may not be extended to the practice of those discreet physicians and chirurgeons, who, being called to for their aid in difficult and hopeless childbirths, prescribe to the woman in travail such receipts, as may be like to hasten her delivery, whether the child be alive or dead: forasmuch as the conception is now at the full maturity; and the endeavour of these artists is not to force an aborsement, but to bring forward a natural birth, to the preservation of the mother, or the child, or both.

CASE IV.

Whether a man, adjudged to perpetual imprisonment or death, may, in conscience, endeavour and practise an escape.

What the civil or common laws have, in this case, determined for the public good, comes not within the compass of our disquisition. Let the guardians and ministers of those laws look carefully to the just execution of them accordingly. The question is only of the law of private conscience; how far that will allow a man to go in case of a sentence passed upon him, whether of death or bonds.

And, first of all; if such sentence be unjustly passed upon an innocent, no man can doubt, but that he may most lawfully, by all just means, work his own freedom.

But if an offender, what may he do?

The common opinion of Casuists is peremptory; that "He, that

* Vid Rodrig. ubi supra. † Constit. Greg. XIV. *Quæ dicit, quòd quivis Confessor, approbatus ab Ordinario, potest absolvere à peccato abortûs.* Ibid.

‡ Mart. Alphons. Vivald. explic. Bull. Cruc.

is kept in prison for any offence, whereupon may follow death or loss of limb, whether the crime be public or private, may lawfully flee from his imprisonment, and may, for that purpose, use those helps, of filing or mining, which conduce to this purpose *."

Their ground is, that universal rule and instinct of self-preservation, which is natural to every creature; much more eminent in man, who is furnished with better faculties than the rest, for the working of his own indemnity. Whereto is added that main consideration of Aquinas; That no man is bound to kill himself, but only doomed to suffer death: not, therefore, bound to do that, upon which death will inevitably follow; which is to wait in prison for the stroke, if he may avoid it: it is enough, that he patiently submits to what the law forces upon him, though he do not co-operate to his own destruction: his sentence abridges him of power, not of will to depart.

Whereupon they have gone so far, as to hold it, in point of conscience, not unlawful for the friends of the imprisoned, to convey unto him files, and cords, or other instruments useful for their escape.

But, herein, some better-advised doctors have justly dissented from them; as those, whose judgment hath not been more favourable to malefactors, than dangerous and prejudicial to the commonwealth: for, how safe soever this might seem in lighter trespasses, yet if this might be allowed, as in conscience lawful to be done, to the rescue of murderers, traitors, or such other flagitious villains, what infinite mischief might it produce! and what were this other, than to invite men to be accessary to those crimes, which the law in a due way intends to punish? Certainly, by how much a more laudable act of justice it is, to free the society of men from such wicked miscreants, by so much more sinful and odious an office it were, to use these sinister means for their exemption from the due course of justice.

But, howsoever for another man to yield such unlawful aid, is no better than a foul affront of public justice, and enwraps the agent in a partnership of crime; yet the law of nature puts this liberty upon the restrained party himself, both to wish and endeavour his own deliverance: although not so, but that if the prisoner have engaged himself by solemn promise and oath to his keeper, not to depart out of his custody, honesty must prevail above nature; and he ought rather to die, than violate that bond, which is stronger than his irons. Very Heathens have, by their example, taught us this lesson, to regard our fidelity more than our life. Thus it should be, and is, with those that are truly Christian and ingenuous, under whatever capacity: but, in the case of graceless and felonious persons, gaolers have reason to look to their bolts and locks; knowing, according to the old rule of wise Thales, that he, who hath not stuck at one villainy, will easily swallow another: perjury will easily down with him, that hath made no bones of murder.

But, where the case is entire, no man can blame a captive, if he

* *Qui retinetur in carcere propter aliquod delictum, &c.* Rodrig. Sum. cap. 40.

would be free; and, if he may untie the knot of a cord wherewith he was bound, why may he not unrivet or grate an iron wherewith he is fettered? forsomuch as he is not bound to yield or continue a consent to his own durance. This charge lies upon the keeper; not the prisoner.

A man, that is condemned to perish by famine; yet, if he can come by sustenance, may receive and eat it. That Athenian malefactor, in Valerius Maximus *, sentenced to die by hunger, was never found fault with, that he maintained himself in his dungeon by the breasts of his good natured daughter.

And, if a man be condemned to be devoured by a lion, there can be no reason why he should not, what he may, resist that furious beast, and save his own life.

But, when I see our Romish Casuists so zealously tender in the case of Religious persons, as that they will not allow them, upon a just imprisonment, to stir out of those grates, whereto they are confined, by the doom of their Prelates; and, when I see the brave resolutions of holy Martyrs, that, even when the doors were set open, would not flee from a threatened death; I cannot but conclude, that, whatsoever nature suggests to a man, to work for his own life or liberty, when it is forfeited to justice, yet, that it is meet and commendable in a true penitent, when he finds the doom of death or perpetual durance justly passed upon him, humbly to submit to the sentence; and not entertain the motions and means of a projected evasion, but meekly to stoop unto lawful authority, and to wait upon the issue, whether of justice or mercy; and, at the worst, to say, with the poet, *Merui, nec deprecor.*

CASE V.

Whether, and how far, a man may be urged to an oath.

An oath, as it is a sacred thing, so it must be no otherwise than holily used; whether on the part of the giver or taker: and, therefore, may neither be rashly uttered, nor unduly tendered upon slight or unwarrantable occasions.

We have not to do here with a promissory oath, the obligation whereof is for another inquisition: it is the assertory oath, that is now under our hand; which the Great God, by whom we swear, hath ordained to be an end of controversies: *At the mouth of two or three witnesses, shall the matter be established;* Deut. xix. 15. and xvii. 6.

As for secular titles of "mine" or "thine," the propriety of goods or lands; next after written evidences, testimonies upon oath must needs be held most fitly decisive: the only scruples are wont to be made in causes criminal.

* Val. Max. l. v. Dom. Sot. de Jure, &c. l. v. q. 5.

Wherein, surely, we may first lay this undoubted ground, that no man is to be proceeded against without an accuser, and that accusation must be made good by lawful witnesses. A judge may not cast any man, upon the plea of his own eye-sight: should this liberty be granted, innocence might suffer, and malice triumph. Neither may any man be condemned upon hearsay; which how commonly false it is, daily experience sufficiently evinceth.

On the other side, men are apt enough to connive at each other's wickedness: and every man is loth to be an informer; whether out of the envy of the office, or out of the conscience of his own obnoxiousness.

And yet, thirdly, it is requisite, that care should be taken and all due means used by authority, that the world may not be overrun with wickedness; but that vice may be found out, repressed, punished.

There cannot, fourthly, be devised a fairer and more probable course for the effecting hereof, than by the discovery, upon oaths, of the Officers and Jurors, in Assizes and Sessions; and of Churchwardens and Sidemen, in Visitations.

The ground of all presentments to or by these men, must be either their own knowledge, or public fame, or an avowed information. Any of these gives a lawful hint to the judge, whether ecclesiastical or civil, to take full trial of the cause and persons.

Knowledge is always certain; but fame is often a liar; and therefore, every idle rumour must not be straight taken upon trust; the inconvenience and injury whereof I have often seen, when some malicious person, desiring to do a despite to an innocent neighbour, raises a causeless slander against him, and whispers it to some disaffected gossips: this flies to the ear of an apparitor: he straight runs to the office, and suggests a Public Fame: the honest man is called into the court: his reputation is blurred, in being but summoned; and, after all his trouble and disgrace, hath his amends in his own hands.

The rule of some Casuists, That ten tongues make a Fame, is groundless and insufficient: neither is the number so much to be regarded, as the quality of the persons: if a whole pack of debauched companions shall conspire to stain the good name of an innocent, as we have too often known, it were a shameful injustice to allow them the authors of a Fame.

The more judicious doctors have defined a Public Fame, by the voice of the greater part of that community, wherein it is spread; whether town, parish, city: and, therein, of those that are discreet, honest, well behaved. We are wont to say, "Where there is much smoke, there is likely some fire." An universal report from such mouths, therefore, may well give occasion to a further inquiry.

If any man's zeal against vice will make it a matter of instance, the case is clear, and the proceeding unquestionable: but, if it be matter of meer office, the carriage of the process may be liable to doubt.

Herein it is meet such course be taken, as that neither a notorious evil may be smothered, nor yet innocence injured. To which purpose, the most confident reporter may be called upon, because fame hath too many tongues to speak at once, to lay forth the grounds of that his whispered crimination; and, if the circumstances appear pregnant, and the suspicions strong, I see not why the ecclesiastical judge, for with him only in this case I profess to meddle, may not convent the person accused; lay before him the crime, which is secretly charged upon him; and, either upon his ingenuous confession enjoin him such satisfaction to the scandalized congregation as may be most fit, or upon his denial urge him to clear himself by lawful witnesses of the crime objected: or, why he may not, if he see further cause, appoint a discreet and able prosecutor to follow the business in a legal way; upon whom the accused, if he be found guiltless, may right himself.

But, all this while, I find no just place for an oath to be administered to a man for his own accusation; which, certainly, is altogether both illegal and unreasonable. If a man will voluntarily offer to clear himself by an oath, out of the assuredness of his own innocence, he may be allowed to be heard; but this may neither be pressed to be done, nor yet conclusive when it is done: for, both every man is apt to be partial in his own case; and he, that durst act a foul sin, will dare to face it. It was ever, therefore, lawful, even when Ecclesiastical Inquisitions were at the highest, for a man to refuse answer to such questions upon oath, or otherwise, which tended to his own impeachment: as unjustly and unwarrantably proposed: and it was but a young determination of Aquinas *, when he was only a Bachelor, in the General Chapter at Paris, contradicted by all the ancient Graduates there, that, when the crime is notorious and the author unknown, the secret offender is bound, upon his Ordinary's charge and command, to reveal himself.

Even the Spanish Casuists, the great favourers and abettors of the Inquisition, teach, that the judge may not, of himself, begin an inquiry: but must be led by something, which may open a way to his search; and, as it were, force him to his proceeding, *ex officio*; as public notice, infamy, common suspicion, complaint; otherwise, the whole process is void in law. Although, herein, some of them go too far, in favour of their great Diana; that, where the crime is known and the author unknown, the judge may, in a generality, inquire of him that did it; and if he have any private information, though without any public fame foregoing, he may, in some cases, raise a particular inquisition upon the party, and call him to defend himself: which course, certainly, gives too much advantage to private malice, and opens too much way to the wronging of innocence.

The fair way of proceedings in all Christian Judicature, should be, by accuser, witness, and judge; in distinct persons, openly known: the accuser complains; the witness evinceth; the judge

* Silvestr. V. Correct. Dom. Sot. l. v. de Jure, q. 4. Less. de Justice l. ii. c. 29.

sentences: the one may not be the other; much less, all three. Were that to be allowed, who could be innocent?

When a witness, then, is called before a competent judge, to give evidence upon oath concerning a third person, in a matter cognoscible by that jurisdiction, he is bound to swear *in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness*; Jer. iv. 2. As for his own concernments, he must refer himself to the testimonies and oaths of others.

CASE VI.

Whether a judge may, upon allegations, proofs, and evidences of others, condemn a man to death, whom he himself certainly knows to be innocent.

THE question hath undergone much agitation.

The stream of all ancient Divines and Casuists runs upon the affirmative. Their ground is, that the judge, as he is a public person, so, in the seat of judicature, he must exercise a public authority; and, therefore, waving his private knowledge and interest, must sentence according to the allegations and proofs brought before him: since he is a judge of the cause, not of the law; whereof he is to be the servant, not the master. There he sits, not to speak his own judgment, but to be the mouth of the law; and the law commands him to judge according to the evidence: the evidence, therefore, being clear and convictive, the doom can be no other than condemnatory.

For my part, I can more marvel at their judgment herein, than approve it; professing for the negative, with some fewer and later authors, upon these sure grounds:—

1. It is an evident and undeniable law of God, which must be the rule of all judges, *The innocent and the righteous slay thou not*; Exod. xxiii. 7. This is a law, neither to be avoided, nor dispensed with. Accusations and false witnesses cannot make a man other than innocent: they may make him to seem so; insomuch as those, that know not the cause exactly, may perhaps be mis-led to condemn him in their judgments: but, to the judge, whose eyes were witnesses of the party's innocence, all the evidence in the world cannot make him other than guiltless; so as that judge shall be guilty of blood, in slaying the innocent and righteous.

2. The law of judging according to allegations and proofs, is a good general direction, in the common course of proceedings; but there are cases, wherein this law must vail to a higher, which is the law of conscience. Woe be to that man, who shall tie himself so close to the letter of the law, as to make shipwreck of conscience: and that bird in his bosom will tell him, that, if, upon whatever pretences, he shall willingly condemn an innocent, he is no better than a murderer.

3. It is not the bare letter of the law, that wise men should

stand upon; but the drift and intention of the law: of that, we may, in some sense, say, as the Apostle did of a higher law, *The letter killeth.* Now every reasonable man knows, that the intention of the law, is, to save and protect the innocent; to punish only the guilty: the judge, therefore, shall be a perverter of law, if, contrary to his knowledge, he shall follow the letter against the intention, in condemning an innocent.

Let no man now tell me, that it is the law, that condemns the man, and not the judge. This excuse will not serve before the tribunal of heaven. The law hath no tongue: it is the judge, that is *lex loquens:* if he, then, shall pronounce that sentence, which his own heart tells him is unjust and cruel, what is he but an officious minister of injustice? But, indeed, what law ever said, "Thou shalt kill that man, whom thou knowest innocent, if false witness will swear him guilty?" This is but a false gloss, set upon a true text; to countenance a man, in being an instrument of evil.

What, then, is, in this case, to be done?

Surely, as I durst not acquit that judge, who, under whatever colour of law, should cast away a known innocent; so, I durst not advise, against plain evidences and flat depositions, upon private knowledge, that man to be openly pronounced guiltless, and thereby discharged: for, as the one is a gross violation of justice; so were the other a public affront to the law, and of dangerous consequence to the weal-public. Certainly, it could not but be extremely unsafe, that such a gap should be opened to the liberty of judgment, that a private breast should be opposed, with an apparent prevalence, against public convictions.

Our Casuists have beaten their brains, to find out some such evasions, as might save the innocent from death, and the judge from blood-guiltiness. Herein, therefore, they advise the judge, to use some secret means to stop the accusation or indictment; (a course that might be as prejudicial to justice, as a false sentence:) to sift the witnesses apart, as in Susanna's case; and, by many subtle interrogations of the circumstances, to find their variance or contradiction. If that prevail not, Cajetan goes so far, as to determine it meet (which how it might stand with their law, he knows: with ours it would not), that the judge should, before all the people, give his oath, that he knows the party guiltless; as whom he himself saw, at that very hour, in a place far distant from that, wherein the fact is pretended to be done. Yea, Dominicus à Soto * could be content, if it might be done without scandal, that the prisoner might secretly be suffered to slip out of the gaol, and save himself by flight. Others think it the best way, that the judge should put off the cause to a superior Bench: and that himself should, laying aside his scarlet, come to the Bar; and, as a witness, avow upon oath the innocence of the party, and the falsity of the accusation. Or, lastly, if he should, out of malice or some other sinister ends, as of the forfeiture of some rich estate, be pressed by higher

* Dom. à Sot. de Jure, &c. l. v. q. 4.

powers to pass the sentence on his own Bench, that he ought to lay down his commission, and to abdicate that power he hath, rather than to suffer it forced to a willing injustice.

And, truly, were the case mine, after all fair and lawful endeavours to justify the innocent and to avoid the sentence, I should most willingly yield to this last resolution: yea, rather myself to undergo the sentence of death, than to pronounce it on the known guiltless; hating the poor pusillanimity of Dominicus â Soto *, that passes a *nimis creditu regidum*, upon so just a determination; and is so weakly tender of the judge's indemnity, that he will by no means hear of his wilful deserting or his office, on so capital an occasion.

In the main cause of life and death, I cannot but allow and commend the judgment of Leonardius Lessius: but, when the question is of matters civil, or less criminal †, I cannot but wonder at his flying off. In these, wherein the business is but pecuniary, or banishment, or loss of an office, he holds it lawful for the judge, (after he hath used all means to discover the falseness of the proofs, and to hinder the proceedings, if thus he prevails not) to pass sentence upon those allegations and probations, which himself knows to be unjust.

The reasons pretended are as poor as the opinion. "For," saith he, "the commonwealth hath authority to dispose of the estates of the subjects, and to translate them from one man to another; as may be found most availing to the public good: and here there appears just cause so to do, lest the form of public judgments should be perverted, not without great scandal to the people; neither is there any way possible to help this particular man's inconvenience and loss: therefore, the commonwealth may ordain, that in such a case, the judge should follow the public form of judicature, though hereby it falleth out, that a guiltless man is undone in his fortunes, and yet his cause known to be good by him that condemns it." Thus he ‡.

But what a loose point is this! Why hath not a man as true propriety in his estate, as his life? or what authority hath the commonwealth, causelessly to take away a man's substance or inheritance, being that he is the rightful owner, more than a piece of himself? When his patrimony is settled upon him, and his in a due course of law and undoubted right of possession, what just power can claim any such interest in it, as, without any ground of offence, to dispossess him? Or, what necessity is there, that the form of public judgments should be perverted, unless an honest defendant must be undone by false sentence? Or, rather, is not the form of public judgment perverted, when innocence suffers for the maintenance of a formality? Or, how is the Judge other than

* *Etenim quòd homo, qui officio suo vivit, debeat tantam jacturam facere, durum creditu est.* Dom. Sot. ubi supra. † *In causis civilibus et minùs criminalibus.* ‡ Less. de Jure, &c. l. ii. de Judice dub. 10. *Quia resp. habeat auctoritatem disponendi, &c.*

a partner in the injury, if, for want of his seasonable interposition, a good cause is lost, and a false plea prevails?

That, therefore, which, in the second place, he alledgeth, that the subject can have no reason to complain of the judge, forasmuch as it is out of his power to remedy the case, and to pass other sentence than is chalked forth by the rule of law, might as well be alledged against him in the plea of life and death; wherein he will by no means allow the judge this liberty of an undue condemnation; neither is there any just pretence, why an honest and well-minded judge should be so sparing, in a case of life; and so too prodigal, in matter of livelihood.

As for his third reason, that the mis-judgment, in case of a pecuniary damage or banishment, may be afterwards capable of being reversed, and upon a new traverse the cause may be fetched about at further leisure; whereas death once inflicted is past all power of revocation; it may well infer, that, therefore, there should be so much more deliberation and care had, in passing sentence upon capital matters, than civil, by how much life is more precious and irrevocable, than our worldly substance: but it can never infer, that injustice should be tolerable in the one, not in the other. Justice had wont to be painted blindfold, with a pair of scales in her hand: wherefore else, but to imply, that he, who would judge aright, must not look upon the issue or event; but must weigh impartially the true state of the cause, in all the grounds and circumstances thereof, and sentence accordingly? To say then, that a judge may pass a doom formally legal, but materially unjust, because the case, upon a new suit, may be righted, were no other than to say, I may lawfully wound a man, because I know how to heal him again.

Shortly, therefore, whether it be in causes criminal or civil, whether concerning life or estate, let those, who sit in the seat of judicature, as they will answer it before the Great Judge of the World, resolve, what event soever follow, to judge righteous judgment; not justifying the wicked; not condemning the innocent: both which are equally abominable in the sight of the Almighty.

CASE VII.

Whether, and in what cases, am I bound to be an accuser of another?

To be an accuser of others, is a matter of much envy and detestation, insomuch as it is the style of the Devil himself, to be *accusator fratrum*, an *accuser of the brethren*.

Yet not of his own brethren in evil. It was never heard, that one evil spirit accused another: but of *our brethren*; Rev. xii. 10. It was a voice from heaven, which called him so. Saints on earth are the brethren of the glorious spirits in heaven. It is the wickedness of that Malicious Spirit, to accuse Saints.

But, though the act be grown into hatred, in respect both of the

agent and of the object; yet, certainly, there are cases, wherein it will become the Saints to take upon them the person and office of accusers.

Accusation, therefore, is either voluntary, or urged upon you by the charge of a superior.

Voluntary is either such as you are moved unto by the conscience of some heinous and notorious crime committed, or to be committed by another, to the great dishonour of God, or danger of the common peace, whereto you are privy: or, such as whereunto you are tied, by some former engagement of vow or oath.

In the former kind, a worthy Divine, in our time, travelling on the way, sees a lewd man committing abominable filthiness with a beast. The sin was so foul and hateful, that his heart would not suffer him to conceal it: he, therefore, hastens to the next justice, accuses the offender of that so unnatural villainy: the party is committed, indicted, and, upon so reverend, though single, testimony, found guilty.

Or, if, in the case of a crime intended, you have secret but sure intelligence, that a bloody villain hath plotted a treason against the sacred person of your sovereign, or a murder of your honest neighbour, which he resolves to execute; should you keep this fire in your bosom, it might justly burn you.

Whether it be, therefore, for the discovery of some horrible crime done, or for the prevention of some great mischief to be done, you must either be an accuser, or an accessary.

The obligation to accuse is yet stronger, where your former vow or oath hath fore-engaged you to a just discovery. You have sworn to maintain and defend his Majesty's royal person, state, dignity; and to make known those, that wilfully impugn it: if now, you shall keep the secret counsels of such wicked designments, as you shall know to be against any of these, how can you escape to be involved in a treason, lined with perjury?

These are accusations, which your conscience will fetch from you, unasked. But if, being called before lawful authority, you shall be required, upon oath, to testify your knowledge, even concerning offenders of an inferior nature; you may not detract your witness, though it amount to no less than an accusation.

Yet there are cases, wherein a testimony, thus required, tending to an accusation, may be refused: as in case of duty, and nearness of natural or civil relation; it were unreasonably unjust for a man to be pressed with interrogations, or required to give accusatory testimonies, in the case of parents, or children, or the partner of his bed: or, if a man, out of remorse of conscience, shall disclose a secret sin to you formerly done, in a desire to receive counsel and comfort from you, you ought rather to endure your soul to be fetched out of your body, than that secret to be drawn out of your lips: or, if the question be illegal; as those, that tend directly to your own prejudice; or those, which are moved concerning hidden offences, not before notified by public fame, or any lawful ground of enquiry, which therefore the judge hath no power to ask: in

these cases, if no more, the refusal of an accusation, though required, is no other than justifiable.

But, where neither the conscience of the horridness of a crime done, nor prevention of a crime intended, nor duty of obedience to a lawful authority, nor the bond of an inviolable pre-engagement, call you to the Bar; it is not a more uncharitable than thankless office, to be an accuser.

Hence it is, that delators and informers have, in all happy and well-governed states, been ever held an infamous and odious kind of cattle. A Tiberius and a Domitian might give both countenance and reward to them, as being meet factors for their tyranny: but a Vespasian, and Titus, and Antoninus Pius, and Macrinus, or whatever other princes carried a tender care to the peace and welfare of their subjects, whipped them in the public amphitheatre; and abandoned them out of their dominions, as pernicious and intolerable.

And, as these mercenary flies, whether of state or of religion, are justly hateful, next to the public executioners; so, certainly, those busy spirited men, which, out of the itching humour of meddling, run from house to house, with tales of private detraction, may well challenge the next room in our detestation. This, together with the other, is that, which God so strictly forbids in his Law; Lev. xix. 16. *Thou shalt not go up and down as a tale-bearer amongst thy people; neither shalt thou stand against the blood of thy neighbour: I am the Lord:* a practice, which wise Solomon, though a great king, and, as one would think, out of the reach of tongues, cries down with much feeling bitterness; Prov. xviii. 8. *The words of the tale-bearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly:* no less than five several times in his divine Proverbs *, inveighing sharply, as if himself had been stung in this kind, against these close, backbiting calumniations.

Shortly, then, accuse, when you are forced, either by the foulness of the fact, or the necessity of your duty: otherwise, reserve your tongue for better offices.

CASE VIII.

Whether a prisoner, indicted of a felonious act which he hath committed, and interrogated by the judge concerning the same, may stand upon the denial, and plead, "Not guilty."

The Casuists vary; and, out of respect to their own laws, are much perplexed in their resolutions: making the great scruple to be in the juridical interrogations, which, if the judge have not proceeded in the due form of law required in such cases, may warrant the offender's denial: and, secondly, making difference of the

* Prov. xi. 13. xx. 19. xxvi. 20, 22.

quality of the offence, and danger of the punishment: which, if no less than capital, may, say they *, give just ground to the accused party, either to conceal the truth, or to answer with such amphibolies and equivocations as may serve to his own preservation; in which course, natural equity will bear him out, which allows every man to stand upon his own defence.

And the case, I perceive, is aggravated in foreign parts: as, by the rack, so, by an oath administered to the person accused, which they call *Juramentum calumniæ* †, which Lessius justly calls a spiritual torture, by the virtue whereof, he is solemnly urged, not to deny what he knows or believes to be true, concerning the business questioned: a practice, which I cannot blame Lessius ‡, if he profess to wish, that the Pope and all secular princes would join together to abrogate, as being an evident occasion of much perjury.

To lay down and determine the case, as it stands with us, in our ordinary proceedings of justice, it must be premised:

1. To deny a known truth, and to aver a wilful lie, cannot be other than a sin.

2. There is a vast difference, betwixt concealing a truth and denying it.

3. It may be sometimes lawful to conceal some truths, though never lawful to deny or contradict them.

4. No man can be bound directly to accuse himself.

5. It is consonant to natural equity, that a man, for the saving of his life, should use the help of all evasions that are not sinful.

6. It cannot be sinful, to put himself upon a legal trial, in a case importing his life.

7. There is no place for a legal trial, where there is an absolute confession of guiltiness.

These positions being pre-required, I say, that is lawful for the prisoner, though convinced in his conscience of the fact, yet to plead, "Not guilty," to the indictment at the bar: forasmuch as he doth therein, according to the sense, both of the judge and jury, only hide and keep back that truth; the finding out and eviction, whereof, lies upon their further search and proof: so as he doth, in pleading "Not guilty," in effect as good as say, "Whatever I find in myself, I have no reason to confess my guiltiness: I stand upon my lawful defence, and cast myself upon my just trial; yielding myself only so far guilty, as your evidence and proofs can make me. Let justice pass upon me: I have no reason to draw on my own condemnation." The plea, thus construed, is lawful and just; wherein, not the shuffling equivocations of the offender, but the upright verdict of a legal jury must carry the cause: to which purpose, that, which sounds as a denial, in the accused, is nothing else, but a professed referring himself to a juridical trial of that fact, which he is not bound to confess.

* Rodriguez. Tract. Ordinis Judicialis. cap. 10. † Sotus l. v. q. 6. de Justitiâ Rei. Art. 1. ‡ Less. de jur. l. ii. ca. 13. dub. 3.

But, when the hand of God hath once found out the man in his sin, and he finds himself legally convinced of his crime, it greatly behoves him, as Joshua charged Achan after the lot had discovered his sin, to give glory to God, in a free and full confession of his wickedness; and to be more open and ingenuous in his acknowledgment, than he was close and reserved in his plea: wherein, as he shall discharge his conscience to that great and holy God, whom he hath offended; so he shall thus tender some kind of poor satisfaction to that society of men, whom he hath scandalized by his crime.

In which regard, I cannot but marvel at the strange determination of learned Azpilcueta *, the oracle of Confessaries; who teaches, that the prisoner, who, being rightly interrogated by the judge, stood stiffly in denial of the fact, and is upon his condemnation carried to his execution, is not bound at his death to confess the crime to the world, if he have before secretly whispered it in the ear of his ghostly father, and by him received absolution: a sentence, that allows the smothering of truths, and the strangling of just satisfaction to those who are concerned, as patients, in the offence; and, lastly, highly injurious to public justice, whose righteous sentence is, by this means, left questionable, and obnoxious to unjust censure. How much more requisite were it, that a public confession should, in this case, save the labour of a private! whereby, certainly, the soul of the offender would be more sensibly unloaded; justice better vindicated; more glory would accrue to God, and to men more satisfaction.

But, however it be lawful for the accused to stand upon these points of legality in the proceedings against him: yet, for my own part, should I be so far given over as to have my hand in blood, and thereupon be arraigned at the bar of public justice, I should, out of just remorse, be the first man, that should rise up against myself: and, which in other men's cases were utterly unlawful, be my own accuser, witness, and judge: and this disposition I should rather commend in those, whose conscience hath inwardly convicted them for heinously criminous; that, since they had not the grace to resist so flagitious a wickedness, they may yet endeavour to expiate it, before men, with an ingenuous confession; as before God, with a deep and serious repentance.

CASE IX.

Whether, and how far, a man may take up arms, in the public quarrel of a war.

War is no other, than a necessary evil: necessary, in relation to peace; only, as that, without which so great a blessing cannot be had. As the wise woman said to Joab; 2 Sam. xx. 18. they should first treat with the men of Abel, ere they smite: and, upon the

* Mart. Azpil. Navar. Enchirid. cap. 25. num. 36.

charge of the Lord of Hosts, (Deut. xx. 10.) conditions must first be tendered; even to heathen enemies, before any acts of hostility shall be exercised.

Where this, which is the worst of all remedies, proves needful, if you ask how far it is lawful to engage; I must ask you, ere I can return answer, first, of the justice of the quarrel: for, surely, where the war is known to be unjust, the willing abettors of it cannot wash their hands from blood. To make a war just, as our Casuists rightly, there must be a lawful authority, to raise it; a just ground whereon to raise it; due forms and conditions, in the raising, managing, and cessation of it. That no authority less than supreme can wage a war, it is clear in nature; for that none other, besides it, can have power of life and death; which both must lie at the public stake in war. That none but a just and weighty cause can be the ground of a war, every man's reason apprehends: for, how precious a blessing had that need to be, that is held worth the purchasing, with the price of so much blood! and how heavy a curse must that needs be, which can only be remedied or prevented, by so grievous a judgment as war! That due terms and conditions are requisite to be offered ere war be undertaken, and observed in the managing and ceasing of it, humanity itself teacheth us; without which, men should run upon one another, with no less fury and disorder than beasts; not staying for any capitulation, but the first advantage; nor terminating their discord in any thing, but utter destruction. Where all or any of these are wanting, the war cannot be just: and where it is known not to be such, woe be to those hands, that are willingly active in prosecuting it. Now the care of all these three main requisites must lie chiefly upon that power, which is entrusted by the Almighty, with the overruling of public affairs: for the subject, as he is bound to an implicit reliance upon the command of the supreme power; so, unless it be in a case notoriously apparent to be unjust, must yield a blindfold obedience to authority; going whither he is led, and doing what he is bidden. But, if the case be such, as that his heart is fully convinced of the injustice of the enterprize, and that he clearly finds that he is charged to smite innocence and to fight against God; I cannot blame him if, with Saul's footmen when they were commanded to fall upon the priests of the Lord, he withhold his hand; and, craving pardon, shew less readiness to act than to suffer.

In the second place, I must ask you with what intentions you address yourself to the field. If it be out of the conscience of maintaining a just cause, if out of a loyal obedience to lawful authority, I shall bid you go on, and prosper: but, if either malice to the parties opposed and therein desire of revenge, or a base covetousness of pay, or hope and desire of plunder have put you into arms, repent and withdraw: for, what can be more sordid or cruel, than to be hired, for days' wages, to shed innocent blood? or what can be more horribly mischievous for a man, than to kill, that he may steal?

Upon your answer to these questions, it will be easy for me to return mine. In a just quarrel, being thereto lawfully called, you may fight. Warrantable authority hath put the sword into your hand: you may use it. But, take heed that you use it, with that moderation, and with those affections, that are meet. Even an authorized hand may offend in striking. Magistrates themselves, if there be revenge in their executions, do no other than murder. Far be it from you, to take pleasure in blood, and to enjoy another man's destruction: if, especially in those wars that are intestine, you shall mingle your tears with the blood which you are forced to spill, it may well become Christian fortitude.

Shortly, do you enter into your arms imprest, or voluntary? If the former, you have nothing but your own heart to look unto, for a fit disposition: that power, whom you justly obey, must answer for the cause. If the latter, you have reason diligently to examine all the necessary points of the power, of the cause, of your intentions; as well considering, that, in a war, it is no less impossible, that both sides should be in the right; than that, in a contradiction, both parts should be true. Here, therefore, your will makes itself the judge of all three; and, if any of them fail, leaves you answerable for all miscarriages: so as you had need to be carefully inquisitive in this case, upon what grounds you go; that so, whatsoever may befall, a good conscience may bear you out, in the greatest difficulties and saddest events, that are wont to attend upon war.

CASE X.

Whether, and how far, a man may act towards his own death.

1. Directly to intend or endeavour that, which may work his own death, is abominably wicked; and no less, than the worst murder.

For, if a man may not kill another, much less himself; by how much he is nearer to himself, than to another: and, certainly, if we must regulate our love to another by that to ourselves, it must follow, that love to ourselves must take up the first room in our hearts; and that love cannot but be accompanied with a detestation of any thing, that may be harmful to ourselves. Doubtless, many, that can be cruel to another, are favourable enough to themselves; but, never man, that could be cruel to himself, would be sparing of another's blood.

To will or attempt this, is highly injurious to that God, whose we only are; who hath committed our life, as a most precious thing, to our trust, for his use, more than our own; and will require from us an account of our managing of it, and our parting from it. It is a foul misprision in those men, that make account of themselves as their own; and, therefore, that they are the absolute lords of their life. Did they give themselves their own being?

had they nothing, but mere nature in them? can they not but acknowledge a higher hand in their formation, and animating? What a wrong were it, therefore, to the great Lord and Giver of Life, to steal out of the world, without his leave, that placed us there! But, much more, if Christians, they know themselves, besides, dearly paid for; and, therefore, not in their own disposing; but in his, that bought them.

Secondly, most desperately injurious to ourselves; as incurring thereby a certain damnation, for ought appears to lookers on, for ever, of those souls, which have wilfully broken God's more easy and temporary prison, to put themselves upon the direful prison of Satan to all eternity.

Nature itself, though not enlightened with the knowledge of the estate of another world, found cause to abhor this practice. However the Stoical Philosophers, and some high Roman Spirits following their doctrine, have been liberal of their lives; the Thebans, of old, professed detestation of this worst of prodigalities: and the Athenians enacted, that the hand, which should be guilty of such an act, should be cut off, and kept unburied: and it was wisely ordained by that Grecian Commonwealth, when their virgins, out of a peevish discontentment, were grown into a self-killing humour, that the bodies of such offenders should be dragged naked through the streets of the city; the shame whereof stopped the course of that mad resolution.

It is not the heaviest of crosses, or the sharpest bodily anguish, that can warrant so foul an act. Well was it turned off by Antisthenes, of old; when, in the extremity of his pain, he cried out, "Oh, who will free me from this torment!" and Diogenes reached him a poniard, wherewith to dispatch himself. "Nay," said he, "I said, from my torment; not from my life:" as well knowing it neither safe nor easy, to part with ourselves upon such terms.

Far, far be it from us, to put into this rank and file those worthy Martyrs, which, in the fervour of their holy zeal, have put themselves forward to martyrdom; and have courageously prevented the lust and fury of tyrants, to keep their chastity and faith inviolable. I look upon these, as more fit objects of wonder, than either of censure or imitation. For these, whom we may well match with Sampson and Eleazar, what God's Spirit wrought in them, he knows that gave it. Rules are they, by which we live; not examples.

2. However we may not, by any means, directly act to the cutting off the thread of life; yet I cannot but yield, with learned Lessius *, that there may fall out cases, wherein a man may, upon just cause, do or forbear something, whereupon death may indirectly ensue. Indirectly, I say; not with an intention of such issue; for it is not an universal charge of God, that no man should, upon any occasion, expose his life to a probable danger: if so, there would be no war, no traffic: but only, that he should not

* Less. de Jure l. ii. c. 9. dub. 6.

causelessly hazard himself; nor with a resolution of wilful miscarriage.

To those instances he gives, of a soldier, that must keep his station, though it cost him his life: of a prisoner, that may forbear to flee out of prison, though the doors be open: of a man condemned to die by hunger, in whose power it is to refuse a sustenance offered: of a man, that latches the weapon in his own body, to save his prince: or, of a friend, who, when but one loaf is left to preserve the life of two, refrains from his part and dies first; or, that suffers another to take that plank in a shipwreck, which himself might have prepossessed, as trusting to the oars of his arms; or, that puts himself into an infected house, out of mere charity to tend the sick, though he know the contagion deadly: or, in a sea-fight, blows up the deck with gunpowder, not without his own danger: or, when the house is on fire, casts himself out at the window with an extreme hazard: to these, I say, may be added many more; as the cutting off a limb, to stop the course of a gangrene; to make an adventure of a dangerous incision in the body, to draw forth the stone in the bladder; the taking of a large dose of opiate pills, to ease a mortal extremity; or, lastly, when a man is already seized on by death, the receiving of some such powerful medicine as may facilitate his passage, the defect of which care and art the eminently learned Lord Verulam * justly complains of in physicians. In these and the like cases, a man may lawfully do those things, which may tend, in the event, to his own death, though without an intention of procuring it.

And unto this head must be referred those infinite examples of deadly sufferings for good causes, willingly embraced for conscience sake. The seven brethren in the Maccabees, alluded to by St. Paul to his Hebrews, Heb. xi. 35. will and must rather endure the butchering of their own flesh, than the eating of swine's flesh, in a willing affront of their Law. Daniel will rather die, than not pray. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego will rather fall down bound into the fiery furnace seven-fold heated, than fall down before the golden image.

And every right disposed Christian will rather welcome death, than yield to a willing act of idolatry, rebellion, witchcraft. If, hereupon, death follow by the infliction of others, they are sinful agents, he is an innocent sufferer.

As for that scruple among our Casuists, Whether a man, condemned to die by poison, may take the deadly draught that is brought him; it is such, as wise Socrates never made of old, when the Athenians tendered him his hemlock: and, indeed, it may as well be disputed, Whether a man, condemned to die by the axe, may quietly lay down his head upon the block; and not, but upon force, yield to that fatal stroke.

A juster scruple is, Whether a man, condemned to a certain and painful death, which he cannot possibly eschew, may make choice

* Εὐθανασία. Lord Verulam's "Advancement of Learning."

rather of a more easy passage out of the world. Wherein I marvel at the indulgence of some doctors, that would either excuse or mince the matter: for, although I cannot blame that natural disposition in any creature, to shrink from pain; and to affect, what it may, the shifting from extremity of misery: yet, for a Christian so to do it, as to draw a greater mischief to himself and an apparent danger to his soul, it cannot justly bear any other than a hard construction. For, thus to carve himself of justice, is manifestly to violate lawful authority; and, while he would avoid a short pain, to incur the shame and sin of a self-executioner.

But if in that way, wherein the doom of death is passed, a man can give himself ease or speed of dissolution; as when a martyr, being adjudged to the fire, uses the help of a bag of gunpowder to expedite his passage; it cannot be, any way, judged unlawful. The sentence is obeyed: the execution is accordingly done: and, if the patient have found a shorter way to that end which is appointed him, what offence can this be either to the law or to the judge?

RESOLUTIONS.

THE THIRD DECADE.

CASES OF PIETY AND RELIGION.

CASE I.

Whether, upon the appearance of Evil Spirits, we may hold discourse with them; and how we may demean ourselves concerning them.

That there are Evil Spirits is no less certain, than that there are men. None but a Sadducee or an Atheist can make question of it.

That Evil Spirits have given certain proofs of their presence with men, both in visible apparitions, and in the possessions of places and bodies, is no less manifest, than that we have souls whereby they are discerned.

Their appearances are not wont to be without grievous inconveniences; whether in respect of their dreadfulness, or their dangerous insinuations.

It is the great mercy of the God of Spirits, that he hath bound up the Evil Angels in the chains of darkness; restraining them from those frequent and horrible appearances, which they would otherwise make, to the terror and consternation of his weak creatures.

Whensoever it pleaseth the Almighty, for his own holy purposes, so far to loosen or lengthen the chains of Wicked Spirits, as to suffer them to exhibit themselves in some assumed shapes unto men, it cannot but mainly import us, to know what our deportment should be concerning them. Doubtless, to hold any fair terms of commerce or peace, much more of amity and familiarity, with them, were no better than to profess ourselves enemies to God: for such an irreconcileable hostility there is, betwixt the Holy God and these Malignant Spirits, that there can be no place for a neutrality in our relation to them; so as he is an absolute enemy to the one, that bids not open defiance to the other.

As, therefore, we are wont, by our silence, to signify our heart-burning against any person; in that we abide not to speak unto those, whom we hate: so must we carry ourselves towards Evil Spirits. And, if they begin with us, as that Devil did in the Serpent

with Eve, how unsafe and deadly it may be to hold chat with them, appears in that first example of their onset; the issue whereof brought misery and mortality upon all mankind: yet then, were our first parents in their innocency, and all earthly perfection; we, now so tainted with sin, that Satan hath a kind of party in us, even before his actual temptations.

As, therefore, we are wont to say, That the fort that yields to parley is half won; so may it prove with us, if we shall give way to hold discourse with Wicked Spirits, who are far too crafty for us to deal withal: having so evident an advantage of us; both in nature, we being *flesh and blood*, they *spiritual wickednesses*; and, in duration and experience, we being but of yesterday, they coetaneous with the world and time itself.

If you tell me, that our Saviour himself interchanged some speeches with the spirits whom he ejected, it is easily answered, that this act of his was never intended for our imitation: since his omnipotence was no way obnoxious to their malice; our weakness is.

I cannot, therefore, but marvel at the boldness of those men, who, professing no small degree of holiness, have dared to hold familiar talk with Evil Spirits, and could be content to make use of them for intelligence: as the famous Jesuit in our time, Pere Cotton: who, having provided fifty questions to be propounded to a demoniac, some concerning matters of learning, some other matters of state concerning the then French King and the King of England; and having them written down under his own hand to that purpose; being questioned concerning it, answered, that he had licence from Rome to tender those demands: as I received it, upon a certain relation, from the learned Dr. Tilenus, with many pregnant and undeniable circumstances, which I need not here express. Although this need not seem strange to me, when I find that Navarre determines plainly, that "When Evil Spirits are present, not by our invocation, as in possessed bodies, it is lawful to move questions to them, so it be without our prayers to them or pact with them, for the profit of others: yea, thus to confer with them, even out of vanity or curiosity, is but venial at the most *." Thus he: with whom Lessius goes so far, as to say, *Licitum est petere verbo à Diabolo, ut nocere desinat, &c.* "It is lawful to move the Devil in words, to cease from hurting, so it be not done by way of deprecation, or in a friendly compliance, but by way of indignation †:" a distinction, which I confess past the capacity of my apprehension; who have not the wit to conceive, how a man can move without implying a kind of suit, and how any suit can consist with an indignation.

It savours yet of a more heroical spirit, which the Church of Rome professeth to teach and practise, the ejection of Evil Spirits by an imperious way of command; having committed to her exorcists a

* Navarr. Enchir. cap. 11. n. 28. † Less. l. ii. de Magiâ. cap. 44. dub. 6.

power of adjuration, to which the worst of Devils must be subject: a power, more easily arrogated, than really exercised. Indeed, this overruling authority was eminently conspicuous; not only in the selected twelve, and the seventy disciples of Christ who returned from their embassy with joy (Luke x. 17.) that the devils were subject to them through his name, but even in their holy successors of the Primitive Church, while the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost were sensibly poured out upon men: but, if they will be still challenging the same power, why do they not as well lay claim to the speaking of strange tongues? to the supernatural cure of all diseases? to the treading on serpents and scorpions? to the drinking of poisons without an antidote? Mark xvi. 17, 18; and, if they must needs acknowledge these faculties above their reach, why do they presume to divide the Spirit from itself? arrogating to themselves the power of the greatest works, while they are professedly defective in the least. Wherein, surely, as they are the true successors of the sons of Sceva, who would be adjuring of devils by the name of Jesus, whom St. Paul preached: so they can look for no other entertainment, than they found from those demoniacs; which was to be baffled, and beaten, and wounded; Acts xix. 13—16.

Especially, if we consider the foul superstition and gross magic, which they make use of in their conjurations; by their own vainly-devised exorcisms, feoffing a supernatural virtue upon drugs and herbs, for the dispelling and staving-off all Evil Spirits.

Because the books are not perhaps obvious, take but a taste in one or two.

In the "Treasure of Exorcisms *," there is this following Benediction of Rue, to be put into a hallowed paper, and to be carried about you and smelled at for the repelling of the invasion of devils †: "I conjure thee, O thou creature of Rue, by the Holy Lord, the Father, the Almighty and Eternal God, which bringeth forth grass in the mountains, and herbs for the use of man; and which, by the Apostle of thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ, hast taught, that the weak should eat herbs: I conjure thee, that thou be blessed and sanctified to retain this invisible power and virtue, that, whosoever shall carry thee about him, or shall smell to thee, may be free from all the uncleanness of diabolical infatuation; and that all devils and witchcrafts may speedily fall from him, as herbs or grass of the earth: through the same our Lord Jesus Christ, which shall come to judge the quick and the dead, and the world by fire." The like is prescribed to be done to the seeds of Hypericon, or St. John's Wort.

Add to this the horrible fumigation to this purpose, as it follows:

* "Thesaurus Exorcismorum, atque Conjurationum Terribilium, &c." Tract. "Dispersio Dæmonum," Fratris Valerii Polydori Patavini, Ord. Minorum Conventualium.

† Tit. Applicabile. 3. "Rutæ in chartâ benedictâ super se portandæ et olfaciendæ, ad omnem invasionem diabolicam repellendam."

"I conjure thee, O thou creature of galbanum, sulphur, assafœtida, aristolochium, hypericon, and rue, by the Living God, by the True God, &c. by Jesus Christ, &c. that thou be for our defence; and that thou be made a perpetual fumigation, exorcised, blessed, and consecrated to the safety of us, and of all faithful Christians; and that thou be a perpetual punishment to all Malignant Spirits, and a most vehement and infinite fire unto them, more than the fire and brimstone of hell is to the Infernal Spirits there, &c *."

But what do I trouble you with these dreadful incantations, whereof the allowed books of conjuration are full?

To these I may add their application of Holy Water, wherein they place not a little confidence, which, saith Lessius †, receives the force from the prayers of the Church, by the means whereof it comes to pass, that it is assisted with divine power; which, as it were, rests upon it, and joins with it, to the averting of all the infestations of the Devil.

But, fain would I learn, where the Church hath any warrant from God to make any such suit; where any overture of promise, to have it granted. What is their prayer, without faith? and what is their faith, without a word?

But I leave these men, together with their crosses and ceremonies and holy relics wherein they put great trust in these cases, to their better informed thoughts. God open their eyes, that they may see their errors!

For us, what our demeanour should be, in case of the appearance or molestation of Evil Spirits, we cannot desire a better pattern than St. Paul: his example is our all-sufficient instruction; who, when the messenger of Satan was sent to buffet him, fell presently to his prayers; and instantly besought God thrice, that it might depart from him; 2 Cor. xii. 7, 8. Lo, he, that could command Evil Spirits out of the bodily possession of others, when it comes to his own turn to be buffeted by them, betakes himself to his prayers to that God, whose grace was sufficient for him; v. 9. To them, must we still have our recourse. If we thus resist the Devil, he shall flee from us; James iv. 7.

In the primitive times, those, that could command, needed not to sue; and, therefore, fasting and prayer was a higher, as a more laborious, work, to this purpose, in the disciples, than their imperative course of ejection: but, for us, we, that have no power to bid, must pray; pray, not to those ill guests that they would depart, not to the Blessed Virgin or our Angel-keeper that they would guard us from them, but to the Great God of Heaven, who commands them to their chains. This is a sure and everlasting remedy: this is the only certain way to their foil, and our deliverance and victory.

* Applicabile. 15. Tit. "Profumigatio horribilis, ejusque vulgata benedictio."
† Less. ubi supra: Dubit 5.

CASE II.

How far a secret pact with Evil Spirits doth extend; and what actions and events must be referred thereunto.

It is a question of exceeding great use and necessity: for, certainly, many thousands of honest and well-minded Christians are, in this kind, drawn into the snares of Satan, unwarily and unwittingly.

For the determining of it, these two grounds must be laid.

First, that there is a double compact with Satan: one, direct and open, wherein magicians and witches, upon woeful conditions and direful ceremonies, enter into a mutual covenant with Evil Spirits: the other, secret and indirect, wherein nothing is seen, or heard, or known to be agreed upon; only by a close implication, that is suggested and yielded to be done, which is invisibly seconded by diabolical operation.

The second ground is, that whatsoever hath not a cause in nature, according to God's ordinary way, must be wrought either by good or evil spirits: that it cannot be supposed, that good angels should be at the command of ignorant or vicious persons of either sex, to concur with them in superstitious acts, done by means altogether in themselves ineffectual and unwarrantable; and, therefore, that the Devil hath an unseen hand in these effects, which he marvellously brings about, for the winning of credit with the world, and for the obliging and engaging of his own clients.

Of this kind, there is, too lamentably, much variety in common experience. Take a handful, if you please, out of a full sack.

Let the first be, that authentic charm of the Gospel of St. John, allowed in the parts of the Romish Correspondence; wherein the first verses of that Divine Gospel are singled out, printed in a small roundel, and sold to the credulous ignorants, with this fond warrant, That whosoever carries it about him shall be free from the dangers of the day's mishaps:

The book and the key, the sieve and the sheers; for the discovery of the thief:

The notching of a stick with the number of the warts, which we would have removed: the rubbing of them with raw flesh, to be buried in a dunghill, that they may rot away insensibly therewith; or washing the part in moonshine, for that purpose:

Words and characters, of no signification, or ordinary form; for the curing of diseases in man or beast: more than too many whereof, we find in Cornelius Agrippa and Paracelsus:

Forms of words and figures, for the stanching of blood; for the pulling out of thorns; for easing pain; for remedying the biting of a mad dog:

Amulets, made up of relics, with certain letters and crosses; to make him, that wears them, invulnerable:

Whistling for a wind, wherewith to winnow; as it is done in some ignorant parts of the west:

The use of a holed flint hanged up on the rack, or bed's head; for the prevention of the night-mare, in man or beast:

The judging by the letters of the names of men or women, of their fortunes, as they call them; according to the serious fopperies of Arcandum:

The seventh son's laying on of hands; for the healing of diseases:

The putting of a verse out of the Psalms into the vessel; to keep the wine from souring:

The repeating of a verse out of Virgil; to preserve a man from drunkenness, all that day following:

Images, astronomically framed under certain constellations; to preserve from several inconveniences: as, under the sign of the Lion, the figure of a lion made in gold, against melancholic fancies, dropsy, plague, fevers: which Lessius might well marvel how Cajetan could offer to defend; when all the world knows, how little proportion and correspondence there is, betwixt those imaginary signs in heaven, and these real creatures on earth:

Judiciary Astrology, as it is commonly practised; whether for the casting of nativities, prediction of voluntary or civil events, or the discovery of things stolen or lost. For, as the Natural Astrology, when it keeps itself within its due bounds, is lawful and commendable, although not without much uncertainty of issue: so that other Calculatory or Figure-casting Astrology is presumptuous and unwarrantable; cried ever down by Councils and Fathers, as unlawful; as that, which lies in the midway, betwixt magic and imposture, and partakes not a little of both:

The anointing of the weapon, for the healing of the wound, though many miles distant: wherein how confident soever some intelligent men have been, doubtless there can be nothing of nature; since in all natural agencies, there must necessarily be a contaction, either real or virtual: here, in such an interval, none can be. Neither can the efficacy be ascribed to the salve; since some others have undertaken and done the cure, by a more homely and familiar ointment. It is the ill bestowed faith of the agent, that draws on the success, from the hand of an invisible physician:

Calming of tempests, and driving away devils, by ringing of bells, hallowed for that purpose:

Remedy of witcheries, by heating of irons, or applying of crosses.

I could cloy you with instances of this kind, wherewith Satan beguiles the simple, upon these two mis-grounded principles:—

1. That, in all experience, they have found such effects following, upon the use and practice of such means: which, indeed, cannot be denied. Charms and spells commonly are no less unfailing in their working, than the best natural remedies. Doubtless, the Devil is a most skilful artist; and can do feats, beyond all mortal powers: but God bless us from employing him. *Is it not because there is not a God in Israel, that* we *go to enquire of Baal-zebub, the God of Ekron?* 2 Kings i. 3.

2. That there may be hidden causes in nature, for the producing

of such effects, which they know not; neither can give any reason of their operations: whereof, yet, we do commonly make use, without any scruple.

And why may not these be ranged under the same head; which they have used with no other but good meaning, without the least intention of reference to any Malignant Powers?

In answer whereto, I must tell them, that their best plea is ignorance; which may abate the sin, but not excuse it. There are, indeed, deep secrets in nature, whose bottom we cannot dive into: as those wonders of the loadstone; a piece, outwardly contemptible, yet of such force as approacheth near to a miracle: and many other strange sympathies and antipathies in several creatures; in which rank may be set the bleeding of the dead at the presence of the murderer; and some acts done for the discovery of witchcraft, both in this and our neighbour kingdom. But, withal, though there be secrets in nature, which we know not how she works; yet we know there are works, which are well known, that she cannot do: how far her power can extend, is not hard to determine; and those effects, which are beyond this, as in the forementioned particulars, we know whither to ascribe.

Let it be, therefore, the care and wisdom of Christians, to look upon what grounds they go. While they have God and Nature for their warrant, they may walk safely: but, where these leave them, the way leads down to the chambers of death.

CASE III.

Whether, reserving my conscience to myself, I may be present at an idolatrous devotion; or, whether, in the lawful service of God, I may communicate with wicked persons.

The question is double: both of them of great importance.

1. The former, I must answer negatively:—Your presence is unlawful upon a double ground; of sin, and of scandal: of sin, if you partake in the idolatry; of scandal, if you do but seem to partake.

The scandal is threefold: you confirm the offenders in their sin: you draw others, by your example, into sin: you grieve the spirits of those wiser Christians, that are the sad witnesses of your offence.

The great Apostle of the Gentiles hath fully determined the question, in a more favourable case; 1 Cor. viii. 4—10. The Heathen sacrifices were wont to be accompanied, in imitation of the Jewish prescribed by God himself, with feasts: the owners of the feast civilly invite the neighbours, though Christians, to the banquets: the tables are spread in their temples: the Christian guests, out of a neighbourly society, go, sit, eat with them: St. Paul cries down the practice, as utterly unlawful. Yet this was but in matter of meat; which sure was God's, though sacrificed to an idol: how

much more must it hold, in rites and devices, merely either human or devilish!

I need not tell you of the Christian Soldiers, in the primitive persecution: who, when they found themselves, by an ignorant mistaking, drawn, under a pretence of loyalty, into so much ceremony as might carry some semblance of an idolatrous thurification, ran about the city in a holy remorse, and proclaimed themselves to be Christians: nor how little it excused Marcellinus, Bishop of Rome, from a heavy censure, that he could say, he did but, for company, cast a few grains of incense into the fire. The charge of the Apostle is full and peremptory, that we should *abstain from every appearance of evil;* 1 Thess. v. 22.

It is a poor plea that you mention, of the example of Naaman. Alas, an ignorant Pagan! whose body if it were washed from his leprosy, yet his soul must needs be still foul. Yet, even this man will thenceforth offer neither burnt-offering nor sacrifice unto any other God, but unto the Lord: nor upon any ground, but the Lord's peculiar; and will, therefore, lade two mules with Israelitish earth; and is now a professed convert. "Yea, but he will still bow in the temple of Rimmon:" but how will he bow? civilly only, not religiously: in the house of Rimmon, not to the idol; not in relation to the false deity, but to the king his master. You shall not take him going alone under that idolatrous roof; but, according to his office, in attendance of his sovereign: nor bowing there, but to support the arm that leaned upon him. And if, upon his return home from his journey, he made that solemn protestation to his Syrians, which he before made to the Prophet: "Take notice, O all ye courtiers and men of Damascus, that Naaman is now become a proselyte of Israel; that he will serve and adore none but the true God; and, if you see him at any time kneeling in the temple of your idol Rimmon, know that it is not done in any devotion to that false God, but in the performance of his duty and service to his royal master;" I see not but the Prophet might well bid him *Go in peace.* However, that ordinary and formal valediction to a Syrian, can be no warrant for a Christian's willing dissimulation; 2 Kings v. 17, 18, 19.

It is fit for every honest man, to seem as he is. What do you howling amongst wolves, if you be not one? Or, what do you amongst the cranes, if you be a stork? It was the charge of Jehu, when he pretended that great sacrifice to Baal, *Search and look, that there be here with you none of the servants of the Lord, but the worshippers of Baal only;* 2 Kings x. 23: surely, had any of God's clients secretly shrouded himself amongst those idolaters, his blood had been upon his own head. Briefly, then, if you have a mind to keep yourself in a safe condition for your soul, let me lay upon you the charge, which Moses enforced upon the congregation of Israel in the case of Korah's insurrection: *Depart, I pray you, from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest ye be consumed in all their sins;* Num. xvi. 26.

2. The latter, I must answer affirmatively:—If the ordinances be holy, why should you not take your part of them?

It is an unjust niceness, to abridge yourself of a blessing, for another man's unworthiness. Doubtless, there ought to be a separation of the precious from the vile; the neglect whereof is the great sin of those, whom in duty it concerns to perform it: but, where this is not accordingly done, shall I suffer for another's offence? My own sins may justly keep me off from God's table: if another man's may do so too, I appropriate the guilt of his sin, to my own wrong. Surely it argues but small appetite to these heavenly viands, if you can be put off with a pretence of others' faults.

Judge of the spiritual repast by this earthly.

Were you thoroughly hungry, would you refrain from your meat because one of the guests hath a pair of foul hands? That may be a just eye-sore to you, but no reason why you should forbear wholesome dishes: carve you for yourself, and look to your own trencher: he feeds for himself; not for you. Sin is the uncleanness of the soul, that cleaves closer to it, than any outward nastiness can to the skin: to feed thus foul, then, is doubtless unwholesome to himself; it can be no hurt to you.

But you are ready to strain the comparison higher, to your own advantage: "Say, that one of the guests hath a plague-sore running upon him: shall I then think it safe to sit at the table with him? now sin is of a pestilent nature; spreading its infection to others, besides its own subject: therefore, it is meet we keep aloof from the danger of his contagion." True, there are sins of a contagious nature, apt to diffuse their venom to others; as there are other some, whose evil is intrinsical to the owner: but these infect, by way of evil counsels, or examples, or familiar conversation; not by way of a mere extemporary presence of the person: by spreading of their corruption to those, that are taken with them; not by scattering abroad any guilt to those, that abhor them. Well did our Saviour know how deadly an infection had seized on the soul of Judas: yet he drives him not from his board, lest his sin should taint the disciples. The Spirit, that writes to the Seven Asian Churches, saw, and professed to see, the horrible infection spread amongst the Thyatirians by the doctrine and wicked practices of their Jezebel: yet, all that he enjoins the godly party, is, to hold their own: Rev. ii. 20, 21, 22, 25. *Have no fellowship*, saith the Apostle, *with the unfruitful works of darkness;* Eph. v. 11: lo, he would not have us partake in evil: he doth not forbid us to partake with an evil man in good works.

However, therefore, we are to wish and endeavour, in our places, that all the congregation may be holy; and it is a comfortable thing, to join with those, that are truly conscionable and carefully observant of their ways, in the immediate services of our God: yet, where there is neglect in the overseers, and boldness in the intruders, and, thereupon, God's sacred table is pestered with some unworthy guest: it is not for you, upon this ground, to deprive your-

self of the benefit of God's blessed ordinances: notwithstanding all this unpleasing encumbrance, you are welcome, and may be happy.

CASE IV.

Whether vows be not out of season, now, under the Gospel: of what things they may be made: how far they oblige us: and, whether, and how far, they may be capable of release.

It is a wrongful imputation, that is cast upon us by the Roman Doctors, that we abandon all vows under the Gospel.

They well see, that we allow and profess that common vow, as Lessius terms it, in baptism; which yet both Bellarmin, and he, with other of their consorts, deny to be properly such. It is true, that, as infants make it by their proxies, there may seem some impropriety of the engagement as to their persons; but, if the party Christened be of mature age, the express vow is made absolutely by and for himself.

Besides this, we allow of the renovation of all those holy vows, relating to the first, which may bind us to a more strict obedience to our God.

Yet more: though we do not now allow the vows of things in their nature indifferent, to be parts of God's worship; as they were formerly under the Law: yet we do willingly approve of them, as good helps and furtherances to us; for the avoiding of such sins as we are obnoxious unto, and for the better forwarding of our holy obedience.

Thus, the charge is of eternal use: *Vow unto God, and perform it;* Ps. lxxvi. 11.

Not that we are bound to vow: that act is free and voluntary: but that, when we have vowed, we are straitly bound to performance. It is with us for our vows, as it was with Ananias and Sapphira for their substance: *While it remained*, saith St. Peter, *was it not thine own?* Acts v. 4. He needed not to sell it: he needed not to give it: but, if he will give, he may not reserve: if he profess to give all, it is death to save some: he lies to the Holy Ghost, that defalks from that, which he engaged himself to bestow.

It mainly concerns us, therefore, to look carefully, in the first place, to what we vow; and to our intentions in vowing: and to see that our vow be not rash and unadvised; of things, either trivial, or unlawful, or impossible, or out of our power to perform: for every vow is a promise made to God; and to promise unto that Great and Holy God, that, which either we cannot or ought not to do, what is it other, than to mock and abuse that Sacred Majesty, which *will not hold him guiltless, that taketh his Name in vain?* It is the charge, to this purpose, of wise Solomon: *Be not rash with thy mouth; and let not thy heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth; therefore, let thy words be few;*

Eccl. v. 2. Your vow, therefore, must be either of things morally good, for the quickening you in that duty, which you are bound to do; or of things indifferent in themselves, the refraining or doing whereof may tend, either to the restraint from sin, or the furtherance of your holy obedience: as a man, that finds his brains weak, and his inclination too strong to pleasing liquor, binds himself by a vow, to drink no wine, save only at God's table; or a man, that find himself apt to be miscarried by his appetite, confines himself by his vow to one dish, or to one meal for the day; or a man, that finds himself given to the pleasure of gaming, to the loss of his time, and the weakening of his estate, curbs himself by his vow never to play for money; or a man, that finds his prayers weak and his flesh rebellious, vows to tame his unruly desires, and to stir up his duller devotions by fasting.

And, as the matter of your vow must be carefully regarded, so also your intentions in vowing: for, if you vow to do good to an ill end, your thank is lost, and danger of judgment incurred. As, if you vow to give alms for vain-glory or ostentation; or, if God shall prosper your usurious or monopolizing project, you will build a hospital; your vow is like to be so accepted, as the story tells us * the prayers were of that bold courtezan, who, coming to the shrine of St. Thomas of Canterbury, as that traitor was styled, devoutly begged, that, through the intercession of that saint, she might be graced with so winning a beauty, that might allure her paramours to a gainful courting of so pleasing a mistress; when, suddenly, as my author tells me, she was stricken blind: and, certainly, so it might well be; for, if a supposed saint were invoked, it was God that was highly provoked by the sinful petition of a shameless harlot; and it was most just for him to revenge it: and so we may well expect it shall be, with whosoever shall dare to make use of his Sacred Name, to their own wicked or unwarrantable purposes.

Since, therefore, our vows must be, for their matter, as Casnists well determine, *De meliore bono;* and, for intentions, holy and directed only to good; it plainly appears, that many idle purposes, promises, resolutions, are wont to pass with men for vows, which have no just claim to that holy title. One says, he vows never to be friends with such a one, that hath highly abused him; another, that he will never come under the roof of such an unkind neighbour: one, that he will drink so many healths to his honoured friend; another, that he will not give the wall or the way to any passenger: one, that he will never wear suit but of such a colour; another, that he will never cut his hair till such an event. These, and such like, may be foolish, unjust, ridiculous self-engagements; but vows, they are not: neither, therefore, do bind the conscience, otherwise, than as Sampson's cords and withes, which he may break as a thread of tow: Judges xvi. 9, 12.

But, as for true vows, certainly they are so binding, that you shall sin heinously, in not performing them. It is no better than

* Brem. Sum. Prædic.

dishonesty, to fail in what we have promised to men; but, to disappoint God in our vows, is no less than sacrilege. That of Solomon's is weighty: *When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that, which thou hast vowed. Better it is, that thou shouldst not vow, than that thou shouldst vow and not pay it. Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin; neither say before the angel, that it was an error: wherefore should God be angry at thy vow, and destroy the work of thy hands?* Eccl. v. 4, 5, 6. If, therefore, a lawful and just vow have passed your lips, you may not be false to God and yourself, in not keeping it.

But, if it shall so fall out, that there proves to be some main inconvenience or impossibility, in the fulfilling of this your solemn promise unto God; whether through the extreme prejudice of your health and life, or the oversweying difficulty of the times; what is to be done? Surely, as under the Law it was left in the power of the parent to overrule the vow of the child; Num. xxx. 3, 4, 5: so I doubt not, but, under the Gospel, it is left in the power of your spiritual fathers to order or dispense with the performance of those vows, which you would, but cannot well fulfil. Neither was it spoken in vain, nor in matter of sins only, which our Saviour, in way of authorization, said to his apostles and their successors, *Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven;* Matt. xviii. 18. In this case, therefore, I should advise you to make your address to your spiritual pastor, and freely lay open your condition before him; and humbly to submit yourself to his fatherly directions in that course, which shall be found best and safest for your soul. Think it not safe, in a business of so high nature, to rely upon your own judgment; and to carve out your own satisfaction: but regard carefully what God hath said of old, *The priest's lips should keep knowledge; and they should seek the Law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the Lord of Hosts;* Mal. ii. 7.

CASE V.

Whom may we justly hold a heretic? and what is to be done in the case of heresy?

THERE is no one point, wherein the Church of God hath suffered more, than in the misunderstanding of this question. How many thousand innocents have, in these latter ages of the Church, perished in this unhappy quarrel! yea, how many famous Churches have been most unjustly thunderstruck, with direful censures of excommunication, down to the pit of hell, upon pretence of this crime, which have been less guilty than their anathematizers! And, even amongst ourselves, how apt we are to brand one another with this hateful mark, where there is no true merit of such a reproach!

It much imports us, therefore, to know who may be deservedly thus stigmatized by us. I have, elsewhere, somewhat largely in-

sisted on this theme: whither I might spare some lines to refer you. But, in short, thus: To let pass the original sense and divers acceptions of the word, a Heresy is none other than an obstinate error against the foundation. All truths are precious; but some, withal, necessary. All errors are faulty; but some damnable: the heinousness of the error is according to the worth of the truth impugned. There are theological verities, fit for us to know and believe: there are Articles of Christian Faith, needful to be known and believed. There are truths of meet and decent superstructure, without which the fabric may stand: there are truths of the foundation, so essential, as that without them it cannot stand. It is a maim to the house, if but a tile be pulled off from the roof; but, if the foundation be razed, the building is overthrown: this is the endeavour and act of Heresy.

But now, the next question will be, what doctrines they are, which must be accounted to be of the foundation.

Our countryman, Fisher the Jesuit, and his associates, will tell you roundly, That all those things, which are defined by the Church to be believed, are fundamental *: a large ground-work of faith!

Doubtless, the Church hath defined all things contained in the Scripture, to be believed: and theirs, which they call Catholic, hath defined all those traditional points, which they have added to the Creed, upon the same necessity of salvation to be believed. Now if all these be the foundation, which is the building? What an imperfect fabric do they make of Christian Religion: all foundation; no walls; no roof!

Surely, it cannot, without too much absurdity, be denied, that there is great difference of truths; some, more important than others: which could not be, if all were alike fundamental. If there were not some special truths, the belief whereof makes and distinguisheth a Christian, the authors of the Creed Apostolic, besides the other Symbols received anciently by the Church, were much deceived in their aim.

He, therefore, that believes the Holy Scriptures (which must be a principle presupposed) to be inspired by God: and, as an abstract of the chief particulars thereof, professeth, to believe and embrace the Articles of the Christian Faith; to regulate his life by the Law of God's Commandments, and his devotion by the rule of Christ prescribed; and, lastly, to acknowledge and receive the Sacraments expressly instituted by Christ: doubtless, this man is by profession a Christian, and cannot be denied to hold the foundation.

And, whosoever shall wilfully impugn any of these, comes within the verge of Heresy: wilfully, I say; for mere error makes not a Heretic. If, out of simplicity or gross ignorance, a man shall take upon him to maintain a contradiction to a point of faith, being ready

* Relat. of the Third Confer. p. 6.

to relent upon better light, he may not be thus branded: eviction and contumacy must improve his error, to be heretical.

The Church of Rome, therefore, hath been too cruelly liberal of her censures, this way; having bestowed this livery upon many thousand Christians, whom God hath owned for his Saints; and upon some Churches, more orthodox than herself: presuming upon a power, which was never granted her from heaven, to state new Articles of Faith; and to excommunicate and bar all, that shall dare to gainsay her oracles.

Whereas, the great Doctor of the Gentiles hath told us from the Spirit of God, that there is but *one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism*, Eph. iv. 5. And what faith is that? St. Jude tells us, *the faith that was once delivered to the saints?* Jude 3: so that, as well may they make more reiterations of Baptism, and multiplicities of Lords, as more Faiths than one. Some explications there may be of that one faith, made by the Church, upon occasion of new-sprang errors: but such, as must have their grounds from fore-written truths; and such, as may not extend to the condemnation of them, whom God hath left free. New Articles of Faith, they may not be; nor bind farther, than God hath reached them.

Heretics then they are, and only they, that pertinaciously raze the foundation of the Christian Faith.

What now must be done with them?

Surely, first, if they cannot be reclaimed, they must be avoided. It is the charge of the Beloved Disciple to the Elect Lady, *If any man come unto you, and bring not* (that is, by an ordinary Hebraism, opposes) *this doctrine, receive him not into your houses, neither bid him God speed;* 2 John 10. But the Apostle of the Gentiles goes yet higher: for, writing to Titus, the great Superintendent of Crete, his charge is, *A man, that is a heretic, after the first and second admonition reject;* Titus iii. 10.

Now, when we compare the charge with the person, we cannot but find that this rejection is not a mere negative act, of refraining company; but a positive act of censure: so as he, who had power to admonish, had also power to reject, in an authoritative or judicatory way.

He says then, *Devita, Reject*, or *Avoid*; not, as Erasmus too truly but bitterly scoffs the Romish practice, *De vitâ tolle*. This, of killing the Heretic, as it was out of the power of a spiritual supervisor; so was it no less far from the thoughts of him, that desired to come *in the spirit of meekness*. Faggots were never ordained by the Apostle, for arguments to confute Heretics. This bloody logic and divinity was of a much later brood; and is for a Dominic, not a Paul, to own: for, certainly, Faith is of the same nature with Love: it cannot be compelled: persuasions may move it; not force.

These intellectual sins must look for remedies of their own kind. But if either they be, as it is often, accompanied with damnable blasphemies against God, whether in his essence or attributes, or

the Three incomprehensible Persons in the All-glorious Deity, or the blessed Mediator betwixt God and Man Jesus Christ in either of his natures; or, else, shall be attended with the public disturbances and dangerous distempers of the kingdom or state, wherein they are broached: the Apostle's wish is but seasonable, in both a spiritual and a bodily sense: *Would to God those were cut off, that trouble you*; Gal. v. 12.

In the mean time, for what concerns yourself, if you know any such, as you love God and your souls, keep aloof from them, as from the pestilence. Epiphanius * well compares Heresy to the biting of a mad dog: which, as it is deadly, if not speedily remedied; so, it is, withal, dangerously infectious: not the tooth only, but the very foam of that envenomed beast carries death in it: you cannot be safe, if you avoid it not.

CASE VI.

Whether the laws of men do bind the conscience; and how far we are tied to their obedience.

Both the extremes of opinion, concerning this point, must needs bring much mischief upon Church and Kingdom. Those, that absolutely hold such a power in human laws, make themselves slaves to men: those, that deny any binding power in them, run loose into all licentiousness.

Know, then, that there is a vast difference betwixt these two: to bind the conscience, in any act; and to bind a man in conscience, to do or omit an act. Human laws cannot do the first of them: the latter they may and must do.

To bind the conscience, is, to make it guilty of a sin, in doing an act forbidden, or omitting an act enjoined, as in itself such; or making that act in itself an acceptable service to God, which is commanded by men. Thus, human laws cannot bind the conscience: it is God only; 1 John iii. 21. who, as he is greater than the conscience, so hath power to bind or loose it. It is he, that is the only Lawgiver to the conscience; Is. xxxiii. 22. James iv. 12. Princes and Churches may make laws for the outward man; but they can no more bind the heart, than they can make it. In vain is that power, which is not enabled with coercion: now what coercion can any human power claim of the heart, which it can never attain to know? The spirit of man, therefore, is subject only to the Father of Spirits; who only sees and searches the secrets of it, and can both convince and punish it. Besides, well did penitent David know what he said, when he cried out, *Against thee only have I sinned*; Ps. li. 4. He knew that sin is a transgression of the Law, and that none but God's Law can make a sin. Men may

* Epiphan. Hæres. l. i.

be concerned and injured in our actions: but it is God, who hath forbidden these wrongs to men, that is sinned against, in our acts of injustice and uncharitableness; and who only can inflict the spiritual (which is the highest) revenge upon offenders. The charge of the great Doctor of the Gentiles to his Galatians, was *Stand fast in the liberty, wherewith Christ hath made us free; and be not entangled again in the yoke of bondage;* Gal. v. 1. What yoke of bondage was this, but the law of ceremonies? What liberty was this, but a freedom from the bondage of that law? And, certainly, if those ordinances, which had God for their Author, have so little power to bind the conscience, as that the yoke of their bondage must be shaken off, as inconsistent with Christian liberty; how much less is it to be endured, that we should be the servants of men, in being tied up to sin by their presumptuous impositions!

The laws of men, therefore, do not, ought not, cannot bind your conscience, as of themselves; but, if they be just, they bind you in conscience to obedience. They are the words of the Apostle to his Romans: *Wherefore, you must needs be subject; not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake;* Rom. xiii. 5. However, then, their particular constitutions in themselves put no special obligation upon us, under pain of sin and damnation; yet, in a general relation to that God who hath commanded us to obey authority, their neglect or contempt involves us in a guilt of sin. All power is of God: that, which the supreme authority therefore enjoins you, God enjoins you by it: the charge is mediately his, though passing through the hands of men.

How little is this regarded, in these loose times, by those lawless persons, whose practices acknowledge no sovereignty but titular, no obedience but arbitrary; to whom the strongest laws are as weapons to the Leviathan, who *esteems iron as straw, and brass as rotten wood!* Job xli. 27.

Surely, had they not first cast off their obedience to him, that is higher than the highest, they could not, without trembling, hear that weighty charge of the great God of Heaven: *Let every soul be subject to the higher powers: for there is no power but of God; and the powers that be, are ordained of God:* Rom. xiii. 1: *Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man, for the Lord's sake;* 1 Peter ii. 13: and, therefore, should be convinced in themselves, of that awe and duty, which they owe to sovereignty; and know and resolve to obey God in men, and men for God.

You see, then, how requisite it is, that you walk in a middle way, betwixt that excessive power, which flattering Casuists have been wont to give to Popes, Emperors, Kings, and Princes in their several jurisdictions; and a lawless neglect of lawful authority. For the orthodox, wise, and just moderation whereof, these last ages are much indebted to the learned and judicious Chancellor of Paris, John Gerson, who first so checked * that overflowing error

* Tract. de Vit. Spec. lect. 4. cit. Dom. a Soto ut infra.

of the power of human usurpation, which carried the world before it, as gave a just hint to succeeding times, to draw that stream into the right channel: insomuch as Dominicus à Soto complains * greatly of him, as, in this, little differing from the Lutheran Heresy: but, *in the way which they call heresy, we worship the God of our fathers*; Acts xxiv. 14: rendering *unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God those things that are God's*: yielding our bodies to Cæsar; reserving our souls for God: tendering to just laws, our active obedience; to unjust, passive.

But, in the mean time, far be it from us, to draw this knot of our obligation harder and closer, than authority itself intends it. Whatever popes may do for their Decrees, certainly good princes never meant to lay such weight upon all their laws, as to make every breach of them, even in relation to the authority given them by God, to be sinful.

Their laws are commonly shut up, with a sanction of the penalty imposed upon the violation. There is an *obedientia bursalis*; as, I remember, Gerson calls it: "an obedience," if not of the person, yet "of the purse;" which princes are content to take up withal. We have a world of sins, God knows, upon us, in our hourly transgressions of the royal laws of our Maker: but, woe were us, if we should have so many sins more, as we break statutes. In penal laws, where scandal or contempt find no place, human authority is wont to rest satisfied with the mulct paid, when the duty is not performed.

Not that we may wilfully incur the breach of a good law, because our hands are upon our purse-strings, ready to stake the forfeiture. This were utterly to frustrate the end of good laws; which do therefore impose a mulct, that they may not be broken: and were highly injurious to sovereign authority; as if it sought for our money, not our obedience; and cared more for gain, than good order; than which there cannot be a more base imputation cast upon government.

As, then, we are wont to say, in relation of our actions to the laws of God; that some things are forbidden because they are sinful, and some things are sinful because they are forbidden: so it holds also in the laws of men; some things are forbidden because they are justly offensive, and some other things are only therefore offensive because they are forbidden: in the former of these, we must yield our careful obedience, out of respect even to the duty itself; in the latter, out of respect to the will of the lawgiver; yet so, as that if our own important occasions shall enforce us to transgress a penal law without any affront of authority or scandal to others, our submission to the penalty frees us from a sinful disobedience.

* *Gersonis positio parùm distat ab hæresi Lutheranâ.* Dominic. à Soto De Just. Jure, &c. l. i. qu. 6.

CASE VII.

Whether tithes be a lawful maintenance for Ministers, under the Gospel; and whether men be bound to pay them accordingly.

As the question of "mine" and "thine" hath ever embroiled the world; so this particular concerning tithes hath raised no little dust in the Church of God: while some plead them in the precise, *quotâ parte*, due and necessary to be paid, both by the Law of God, and nature itself; others decry them as a Judaical Law; partly ceremonial, partly judicial; and, therefore, either now unlawful, or at least neither obligatory nor convenient.

What is fit to be determined in a business so over agitated, I shall shut up in these ten propositions.

1. The maintenance of the Legal ministry allowed and appointed by God, was exceeding large and liberal. Besides all the tithes of corn, wine, oil, herbs, herds, flocks, they had forty-eight cities set forth for them; with the fields round about them, to the extent of two thousand cubits every way. They had the firstfruits of wine, oil, wool, &c. in a large proportion: he was held to be a man of an evil eye, that gave less than the sixtieth part. They had the firstborn of cattle, sheep, beeves, goats; and the price of the rest, upon redemption: even the firstborn of men must ransom themselves, at five shekels a man. They had the oblations and vows of things dedicated to God. They had the ample loaves, or cakes * rather, of shew-bread, and no small share in meat-offerings, sin-offerings, trespass-offerings, heave-offerings, shake-offerings: of sacrifices eucharistical, they had the breast and shoulder; of other, the shoulder and the two cheeks: yea, the very burnt-offerings afforded them a hide. Besides all these, all the males were to appear before the Lord, thrice a year: none were exempted, as their Doctors tell us, but servants, deaf, dumb, idiots, blind, lame, defiled, uncircumcised, old, sick, tender and weak, not able to travel; and no one of these, which came up, might appear empty-handed. What do I offer to particularize? There were no less than twenty-four gifts allotted to the priests, expressly in the Law: the severals whereof whoso desires to see, may find in the learned and profitable Annotations of Mr. Ainsworth, out of Maimonides †.

2. We can have no reason to imagine, that the same God, who was so bountiful in his provisions for the Legal ministry, should bear less respect to the Evangelical; which is far more worthy and excellent, than the other. Justly, therefore, doth St. Paul argue, from the maintenance of the one, a meet proportion for the fit sustentation of the other; 1 Cor. ix. 13.

3. It is not fit for God's ministers to be too intent on matter of

* Ten hand-breadths long, five broad, seven fingers high.

† H. Ainsworth in Lev. xxiv. 9. ex Maimonide.

profit: their main care must be the spiritual proficiency of the souls of their people: the secular thoughts of outward provisions must come in only on the by. But, howsoever they may not be entangled in worldly affairs, yet they ought in duty to cast so much eye upon these earthly things, as may free them from neglect. It is to Timothy that St. Paul writes, that *If any man provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel;* 1 Tim. v. 8.

4. Under the Law, the tenth part was precisely allotted, by the Owner of All Things, for the maintenance of the sacred tribe: and, if the Wise and Holy God had not found that a meet proportion for those that served at his altar, he had either pitched upon some other or left it arbitrary. Yea, even before the Law, Abraham, and in his loins Levi himself, paid tithes to Melchisedec, the priest of the Most High God; Gen. xiv. 20. Heb. vii. 4. And, whether it were by his example or by some natural instinct, we find the very heathen nations, after some great victory atchieved, were wont to devote still the tithe of their spoils to their Deities: so Camillus, when he had after a long siege taken the rich city Vejos, (a place of such importance, that, upon the taking of it, he wished some great cross might befal Rome, for the tempering of so high a felicity) he presently offereth the tithe to his Gods*: yea, it was their custom who were most devout, to consecrate the tithe of all their increase to those Gods they were most addicted unto; insomuch as the Romans noted it in their Lucullus, that he therefore grew up to so vast an estate, because he still devoted the tithe of his fruits to Hercules: and † Pliny tells us, that, when they gathered their frankincense, none of it might be uttered till the priest had the tithe of it set forth for him.

5. There can be no good reason given, why we may not observe the very same rate of proportion, in laying out the maintenance of the ministry under the Gospel: and, if these rules and examples be not binding, since religion consisteth not now in numbers at all; yet there is no cause why Christian kingdoms or commonwealths may not settle their choice upon the same number and quantity, with both Jews and Gentiles.

6. The national laws of this kingdom have set out the same proportion of tenths, for this purpose: if, therefore, there were no other obligation from the Law of God or of the Church, nor any precedents from the practice of the rest of the world; yet, in obedience to our municipal laws, we are bound to lay forth the tenth part of our increase, to the maintenance of God's service; and that tenth is as truly due to the minister, as the nine parts to the owner.

7. Since the tenth part is, in the intention of the law both civil and ecclesiastical, dedicated to the service of God; and, in the mere intuition thereof, is allotted to God's ministers; there can be

* Ὄφρα θεῷ δεκάτην, &c. Clem. Al. Strom. 1.

† Plin. l. xii. Bongus de num. Myster. num. 19.

no reason, why it can be claimed or warrantably received by lay persons, for their proper use and behoof: so as this practice of impropriation, which was first set on foot by unjust and sacrilegious Bulls from Rome, is justly offensive both to God and good men; as mis-deriving the well-meant devotions of charitable and pious souls into a wrong channel. Nothing is more plain, than that tithes were given to the Church; and, in it, to God: how, therefore, that, which is bequeathed to God, may be alienated to secular hands, let the possessors look.

8. Let men be tied to make good the Apostle's charge, since the Legal rate displeases; and it shall well satisfy those, that wait upon God's services under the Gospel. The charge of the Apostle of the Gentiles, is, *Let him, that is taught in the word, communicate to him, that teacheth, in all good things;* Gal. vi. 6: whereto he adds, *Be not deceived, God is not mocked;* v. 7. The charge is serious and binding: and the required communication is universal; and that with a grave item of God's strict observation of performance. We may not think to put it off with Ambrose's mis-pointed reading, of referring the *all good things* to the teaching; a conceit, sensibly weak and misconstructive: nothing is more evident, than that it hath relation to the communicating; wherein, for ought I see, God intends a larger bounty to the Evangelical ministry than to the Legal: where all is to be communicated, what is excepted? All: not exclusive of the owner; but imparted by the owner. Let this be really done, there will be no reason to stand upon the tenths.

9. But, that this may be accordingly done, there is no law, that requires a mere arbitrariness in the communicators. The duty of the teacher is punctually set down; and so well known, that the meanest of the people can check him with his neglect: and why should we think the reciprocal duty of the hearer fit to be left loose and voluntary? yet such an apprehension hath taken up the hearts of too many Christians, as if the contributions to their ministers were a matter of mere alms; which as they need not to give, so they are apt, upon easy displeasures, to upbraid. But these men must be put in mind of the just word of our Saviour, *The labourer is worthy of his wages.* The ministry signifies a service; a public service at God's altar: whereto the wages is no less due, than the meat is to the mouth of him that pays for it. No man may more freely speak of tithes than myself, who receive none, nor ever shall do. Know, then, ye proud ignorants, that call your ministers your alms-men, and yourselves their benefactors, that the same right you have to the whole, they have to a part: God, and the same laws that have feoffed you in your estates, have allotted them their due shares in them; which, without wrong, ye cannot detract. It is not your charity, but your justice, which they press for their own. Neither think to check them, with the scornful title of your servants: servants they are, indeed, to God's Church; not to you: and, if they do stoop to particular services for the good of your souls, this is no more disparagement to them, than it is to the

blessed angels of God, to be *ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them, who shall be heirs of salvation*; Heb. i. 14. Shortly, it is the Apostle's charge, ratified in heaven, that they, which labour in the word and doctrine, should be remunerated with double honour: that is, not formal, of words and compliments; but real, of maintenance: which he lays weight upon his Timothy to enjoin; 1 Tim. v. 17.

10. And surely, how necessary it is that we should be at some certainty in this case, and not left to the mere arbitrary will of the givers, it too well appears in common experience: which tells us how ordinary it is, where ministers depend upon voluntary benevolences, if they do but upon some just reproof gall the conscience of a guilty hearer, or preach some truth which disrelishes the palate of a prepossessed auditor, how he straight flies out; and not only withholds his own pay, but also withdraws the contributions of others: so as the free-tongued teacher must either live by air, or be forced to change his pasture. It were easy to instance, but charity bids me forbear. Hereupon it is, that these sportulary preachers are fain to sooth up their many masters; and are so gagged with the fear of a starving displeasure, that they dare not be free in the reprehension of the daring sins of their uncertain benefactors; as being charmed to speak either *placentia*, or nothing. And if there were no such danger in a faithful and just freedom, yet how easy is it to apprehend, that if, even when the laws enforce men to pay their dues to their ministers, they yet continue so backward in their discharge of them; how much less hope can there be, that, being left to their free choice, they would prove either liberal or just in their voluntary contributions?

Howsoever, therefore, in that innocent infancy of the Church, wherein zealous Christians, out of a liberal ingenuity were ready to lay down all their substance at the Apostles' feet; and, in the primitive times immediately subsequent, the willing forwardness of devout people took away all need of raising set maintenances for God's ministers: yet now, in these depraved and hard-hearted times of the Church, it is more than requisite, that fixed competencies of allowance should, by good laws, be established upon them; which being done by way of tithes in those countries wherein they obtain, there is just cause of thankfulness to God for so meet a provision, none for a just oppugnation.

CASE VIII.

Whether it be lawful for Christians, where they find a country possessed by savage Pagans and Infidels, to drive out the native inhabitants; and to seize and enjoy their lands, upon any pretence; and, upon what grounds, it may be lawful so to do.

What unjust and cruel measure hath been heretofore offered by the Spaniard to miserable Indians, in this kind, I would rather you

should receive from the relation of their own Bishop, Bartholomæus Casa, than from my pen. He can tell you a sad story of millions of those poor savages, made away, to make room for those their imperious successors; the discovery of whose unjust usurpation, procured but little thanks to their learned professors of Complutum and Salamanca.

Your question relates to our own case: since many thousands of our nation have transplanted themselves into those regions, which were prepossessed by barbarous owners.

As for those countries, which were not inhabited by any reasonable creatures; as the Bermudas, or Summer Islands, which were only peopled with hogs and deer, and such like brute cattle; there can be no reason why they should not fall to the first occupant: but, where the land hath a known master, the case must vary.

For the decision whereof, some grounds are fit to be laid.

No nation under heaven, but hath some religion or other: and worships a god, such as it is; although a creature much inferior, in very nature, to themselves; although the worst of creatures, evil spirits. And that religion, wherein they were bred, through an invincible ignorance of better, they esteem good, at least.

Dominion, and propriety, is not founded in religion; but in a natural and civil right. It is true, that the Saints have in Christ, the Lord of All Things, a spiritual right in all creatures: *All things are yours*, saith the Apostle, *and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's:* but the spiritual right gives a man no title at all to any natural or civil possession here on earth. Yea, Christ himself, though, both as God and as Mediator, the whole world were his; yet he tells Pilate, *My kingdom is not of this world:* neither did he, though the Lord Paramount of this Whole Earth, by virtue of that transcendent sovereignty put any man out of the possession of one foot of ground, which fell to him, either by birth or purchase. Neither doth the want of that spiritual interest debar any man, from a rightful claim and fruition of these earthly inheritances.

The barbarous people were lords of their own; and have their sagamores, and orders, and forms of government, under which they peaceably live, without the intermeddling with other nations.

Infidelity cannot forfeit their inheritance to others; no more than enmity, professed by Jews to Christian Religion, can escheat their goods to the crowns under which they live. Yea, much less: for those Jews, living amongst Christian people, have or might have had means sufficient to reclaim them from their stubborn unbelief; but these savages never had the least overture of any saving helps towards their conversion. They, therefore, being as true owners of their native inheritances as Christians are of theirs, can no more be forced from their possessions by Christians, than Christians may be so forced by them. Certainly, in the same terms, wherein they stand to Christians, do also, in their judgment, Christians stand to them: and, if it would seem hard to us, that an inundation of Pagans should, as heretofore it hath done, break in upon us and

drive us out of our native possessions, how could it seem less unjust in us to them?

Their idolatries and sins against nature are heinous and abominable; and such, as for which God, of old, condemned the seven nations to an utter extirpation. But what commission have we for their punishment? Could we shew such a patent in this case, as the Israelites had for their wars against Amalek and those neighbouring Heathens, all were sure: but you know who said, *What have I to do to judge them that are without?* 1 Cor. v. 12: and, if he may not be a judge, who may be an executioner?

Refusal of Christianity can be no sufficient ground, of either invasion or expulsion: since violence is not the appointed way for plantation of the faith; which must be persuaded and not compelled.

That sentence, therefore, of Pope Gregory *, *Justum sanctúmque esse bellum*, &c. ("That is a just and holy war, which is by Christians made against Infidels, that they, being brought under subjection, the Gospel of Christ might be preached unto them; lest that if they should not be subjected, they might be a hindrance to preaching, and to the conversion of those that would believe;") is surely either not out of the chair, or beside the cushion; and better beseems a successor of Romulus, than of Peter.

I may not omit to acquaint you, how hotly this main question was disputed by Spanish and Italian Divines, upon the very first entrance of this litigious usurpation: at which time Pope Alexander the Sixth, anno 1493, gave his large Decretory Bull to Ferdinand King and Isabella Queen of Castile and Arragon, for his expedition against the barbarous Indians of the then newly discovered world. Genesius Sepulveda, a learned Spaniard, writ then, in defence and encouragement of this holy invasion, a Dialogue, which he called Democrates Secundus, which was published at Rome, by the procurement of Antonius Augustinus, auditor of the palace; which no sooner came abroad, than it was eagerly set on, by the Divines both of Italy and Spain. Amongst these latter, the Doctors of Salamanca and the Complutenses, and above them Antonius Ramirus Bishop of Segovia, fall foul upon that offensive discourse; which Genesius would fain have vindicated by an Apology, set forth to that purpose: but, how insufficiently, it were easy to shew, if it were as needful. But, to make the matter good, he thinks to back himself by the authority of great and famous persons, both Counsellors and Doctors by him cited; and, above all, by that loud Bull of Alexander †; wherein yet, for ought I see, the charge which is laid on those princes is only to reduce the peo-

* Greg. cap. *Per venerabilem*. et cap. *Si non*. 23, q. 4. *Justum sanctúmque esse bellum, quod Infidelibus a Christianis infertur, ut eis imperio subditis prædicari possit Christi Evangelium; nec si imperio subditi non sint, prædication, et conversioni eorum qui crediderint impedimento esse possint.*

† Decret. et indultum Alex. VI. super expedition, &c. *Populos, in ejusmodi insulis et terris degentes, ad Christianam Religionem inducere votis et debeatis, &c.*

ple living in those islands and countries to receive Christian Religion; which we may well apprehend more likely to be done, by other means, than by the sword. After much agitation, it pleased the King of Spain, to require the judgment of Francisco à Victoria *, the famous Professor of Divinity at Salamanca, concerning this so weighty affair; which he hath published with such wisdom and moderation, as so great a business required; stating the question aright on both sides; both shewing the insufficiency of the received grounds of that Indian expedition, and directing to those just motives and rules of proceedings herein, as might be, in such a case, justifiable: to which grave and solid discourse of his, you may, if you please, be referred for further satisfaction.

Onwards, I shall draw forth some few of such considerations from him, as may serve for my present purpose.

First, therefore, it is lawful for Christians to travel into any country under heaven; and, as strangers, to stay there, without any wrong done to the natives: a thing, allowed by the law of nations, derived from the law of nature; by which law it is every where held an inhuman thing, to offer ill measure to a stranger. It is the argument, that righteous Lot used to the worst of Pagans, the Sodomites; *Only unto these men do nothing, for therefore are they come under the shadow of my roof;* Gen. xix. 8.

And if, before the division of nations, the earth lay freely open to all passengers without scruple, to travel whither they pleased; surely, that partition was never intended to warrant a restraint: and, if nature have made the sea and all the inlets of it common; it were very injurious to abridge any nation of the free use of so liberal an element.

Secondly, it is lawful for us to use traffic with those infidels, and to interchange commodities with them, and to abide upon their coasts for negotiation, and to fish in their sea, and to take part of those profits which nature hath made common to all comers.

And, if those Pagans shall oppose us in so warrantable courses, it will be meet for us to tender them all fair satisfaction; persuading them that we intend no harm or prejudice to them in their persons or estate, but much good to both; labouring to win them by all courteous demeanor.

But, if they shall fly out, notwithstanding all our kind endeavours, into a violent opposition of us, setting upon us in a hostile manner, offering to cut our throats in so unjust a quarrel; it is lawful for us to stand upon our defence, and to repel one force with another, and to use all convenient means for our security; and, if we cannot otherwise be safe, to raise bulwarks or fortifications for our own indemnity; and, if we find ourselves overpowered by implacable savages, to call for the aid and assistance of our friends, and, if the enmity continue and proceed, of our princes: since the just cause of war is the propulsation of public injuries; and such injury is as great, as barbarous.

* Franc. à Victoria Relect. de Indis.

But, if not so much cruelty of disposition, as fear and suspicion of a strange nation shall arm them against us; our care must be, so to manage our own defence, as may be least offensive to them: and therefore we may not take this occasion of killing their persons, or sacking their towns, or depopulating their countries; for that, in this case, they are no other than innocent.

If after all gentle entreaties, courteous usages, and harmless self-defence, they shall persist in a malicious hostility, and can by no means be reclaimed from their impetuous onsets; there is now just cause not to deal with them as innocents, but as enemies; and, therefore, to proceed against them accordingly.

Thirdly, But a higher and more warrantable title, that we may have to deal with these barbarous infidels, is, for the propagation of Christian Religion, and the promulgation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, amongst these miserable savages: for which we have good ground from the charge of our Saviour; *Go, preach the Gospel to every creature;* Mark xvi. 15: and, he, that was in bonds for the name of the Lord Jesus, tells us, *The word of God is not bound*; 2 Tim. ii. 9: not bound, either in fetters, or within limits.

Oh, that we could approve to God and our consciences, that this is our main motive and principal drift in our Western Plantations: but how little appearance there is of this holy care and endeavour, the plain dealer, upon knowledge, hath sufficiently informed us: although I now hear of one industrious spirit, that hath both learned the language of our new islanders, and printed some part of the Scripture in it, and trained up some of their children in the principles of Christianity; a service, highly acceptable to God, and no less meritorious of men.

The Gospel then may be, must be preached to those Heathens; otherwise they shall perpetually remain out of the state of salvation: and all possible means must be used for their conversion.

But, herein, I must have leave to depart from Victoria, that he holds it lawful, if the savages do not freely permit, but go about to hinder, the preaching of the Gospel, to raise war against them; as if he would have them cudgelled into Christianity.

Surely, this is not the way. It is for Mahometans to profess planting religion by the sword: it is not for Christians. It is a just clause, therefore, that he puts in, that the slaughters hereupon raised may rather prove a hindrance to the conversion of the savages; as indeed it fell out: the poor Indians being, by these bloody courses, brought into such a detestation of their masters, the Castilians, that they professed they would not go to heaven if any Spaniards were there.

The way, then, to plant the Gospel of Christ successfully among those barbarous souls, must be only gentle and plausible. First, by insinuating ourselves into them, by a discreet familiarity and winning deportment; by a holy and inoffensive living with them; by working upon them, with the notable examples of impartial justice, strict piety, tender mercy, compassion, chastity, temperance, and

all other Christian virtues: and, when they are thus won to a liking of our persons and carriage, they will be then well capable of our holy counsels: then, will the Christian Faith begin to relish with them; and they shall now grow ambitious of that happy condition, which they admire in us: then, shall they be glad to take us into their bosoms, and think themselves blessed in our society and cohabitation. Lo, this is the true way of Christian conquests; wherein I know not whether shall be the greater gainer, the victor or the conquered: each of them shall bless other, and both shall be blessed by the Almighty.

CASE IX.

Whether I need, in case of some foul sin, committed by me, to have recourse to God's Minister for absolution; and what effect I may expect therefrom.

A MEAN would do well, betwixt two extremes: the careless neglect of our spiritual fathers, on the one side; and too confident reliance upon their power, on the other. Some there are, that do so overtrust their leaders' eyes, that they care not to see with their own: others dare so trust their own judgment, that they think they may slight their spiritual guides: there can be no safety for the soul, but in a mid-way betwixt both these.

At whose girdle the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven do hang, methinks we should not need dispute, when we hear our Saviour so expressly deliver them to Peter, in the name of the rest of his fellows; and, afterwards, to all his Apostles, and their lawful successors in the dispensation of the Doctrine and Discipline of his Church: in the dispensation of doctrine, to all his faithful ministers under the Gospel; in the dispensation of discipline, to those that are entrusted with the managing of Church-government.

With these latter we meddle not: neither need we, if we had occasion, after the so learned and elaborate discourse of the Power of the Keys, set forth by judicious Doctor Hammond, to which I suppose nothing can be added.

The former is that, which lies before us.

Doubtless, every true minister of Christ hath, by virtue of his first and everlasting commission, two keys delivered into his hand; the key of knowledge, and the key of spiritual power. The one, whereby he is enabled to enter and search into, not only the revealed mysteries of salvation; but also, in some sort, into the heart of the penitent: there discovering, upon an ingenuous revelation of the offender, both the nature, quality, and degree of the sin; and the truth, validity, and measure of his repentance. The other, whereby he may, in some sort, either lock up the soul under sin, or free it from sin.

These keys were never given him, but with an intention that he should make use of them upon just occasion.

The use, that he may and must make of them, is both general and special.

General, in publishing the will and pleasure of God, signified in his word, concerning sinners; pronouncing forgiveness of sins to the humble penitent, and denouncing judgment to the unbelieving and obdured sinner. In which regard, he is as the herald of the Almighty, proclaiming war and just indignation to the obstinate, and tendering terms of pardon and peace to the relenting and contrite soul: or rather, as the Apostle styles him, 2 Cor. v. 20. God's *Ambassador*, offering and suing for the reconciliation of men to God; and, if that be refused, menacing just vengeance to sinners.

Special, in particular application of this knowledge and power to the soul of that sinner, which makes his address unto him.

Wherein must be enquired, both what Necessity there is of this recourse, and what Aid and Comfort it may bring to the soul.

Two cases there are, wherein certainly there is a Necessity of applying ourselves to the judgment of our spiritual guides.

The first is, in our doubt of the nature and quality of the fact; whether it be a sin, or no sin: for, both many sins are so gilded over with fair pretences and colourable circumstances, that they are not to be descried but by judicious eyes; and some actions, which are of themselves indifferent, may, by a scrupulous conscience, be mistaken for heinous offences. Whither shall we go in these doubts, but to our counsel, learned in the laws of God; of whom God himself hath said, by his Prophet, *The priest's lips should keep knowledge; and they should seek the Law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the Lord of Hosts;* Mal. ii. 7.

The second is, in the irresoluble condition of our souls, after a known sin committed: wherein the burdened conscience, not being able to give ease unto itself, seeks for aid to the sacred hand of God's penitentiary here on earth; and there may find it.

This is that, which Elihu, as upon experience, suggesteth unto Job, on his dunghill: *The soul of the remorsed draweth near to the grave, and his life to the destroyers. But, if there be a messenger*, of God, *with him, an interpreter, one of a thousand, to shew unto man his uprightness*, and the soundness of his repentance, *Then is* (God) *gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down into the pit; I have found a ransom, &c. He shall pray unto God; and he will be favourable unto him; and he shall see his face with joy;* Job xxxiii. 22—26.

In case of some dangerous sickness of the body, we trust not our own skill, nor some ignorant quack-salvers; but seek to a learned and experienced physician, for the prescription of some sure remedies: whereas, if it be but for a sore finger or a tooth-ach, we care only to make use of our own receipts. And so, in civil quarrels, if it be only some slight brabble, we think to compose it alone; but, if it be some main question importing our freehold, we are glad to wait on the stairs of some judicious lawyer, and to fee him

for advice. How much more is it thus, in the perilous condition of our souls! which, as it is a part far more precious than its earthly tabernacle; so the diseases, whereto it is subject, are infinitely more dangerous and deadly.

Is your heart, therefore, embroiled within you, with the guilt of some heinous sin? labour, what you may, to make your peace with heaven: humble yourself unto the dust, before the Majesty, whom you have offended: beat your guilty breast; water your cheeks with your tears; and cry mightily to the Father of Mercies, for a gracious remission: but if, after all these penitent endeavours, you find your soul still unquiet, and not sufficiently apprehensive of a free and full forgiveness, betake yourself to God's faithful agent, for peace: run to your ghostly physician: lay your bosom open before him: flatter not your own condition: let neither fear nor shame stay his hand, from probing and searching the wound to the bottom: and, that being done, make careful use of such spiritual applications, as shall be by him administered to you. This, this is the way, to a perfect recovery, and fulness of comfort.

But, you easily grant that there may be very wholesome use of the ghostly counsel of your minister, in the case of a troubled soul: but you doubt of the validity and power of his absolution: concerning which, it was a just question of the Scribes in the Gospel, *Who can forgive sins, but God only?* Our Saviour therefore, to prove that he had this power, argues it from his Divine Omnipotence: He only hath authority to forgive sins, that can say to the decrepid paralitic, *Arise, take up thy bed, and walk:* none but a God can, by his command, effect this: he is, therefore, the true God, that may absolutely say, *Thy sins be forgiven thee;* Mark ii. 6—12.

Indeed, how can it be otherwise? Against God only, is our sin committed; against man, only in the relation that man hath to God: he only can know the depth of the malignity of sin, who only knows the soul wherein it is forged: he only, who is Lord of the Soul, the God of Spirits, can punish the soul for sinning: he only, that is infinite, can doom the sinful soul to infinite torments: he only, therefore, it must be, that can release the guilty soul from sin and punishment. If, therefore, man or angel shall challenge to himself this absolute power to forgive sin, let him be accursed.

Yet, withal, it must be yielded, that the Blessed Son of God spake not those words of his last commission in vain: *Whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosesoever sins ye retain, they are retained;* John xx. 23: neither were they spoken to the then present apostles only; but, in them, to all their faithful successors to the end of the world.

It cannot, therefore, but be granted, that there is some kind of power left in the hand of Christ's ministers, both to remit and retain sin.

Neither is this power given only to the governors of the Church, in respect of the censures to be inflicted or relaxed by them; but

to all God's faithful ministers, in relation to the sins of men: a power, not sovereign and absolute, but limited and ministerial; for either quieting the conscience of the penitent, or further aggravating the conscience of sin and terror of judgment to the obstinate and rebellious.

Neither is this only by way of a bare verbal declaration; which might proceed from any other lips: but in the way of an operative and effectual application; by virtue of that delegate or commissionary authority, which is by Christ entrusted with them. For, certainly, our Saviour meant, in these words, to confer somewhat upon his ministers, more than the rest of the world should be capable to receive or perform.

The absolution, therefore, of an authorized person must needs be of greater force and efficacy, than of any private man, how learned or holy soever; since it is grounded upon the institution and commission of the Son of God, from which all power and virtue is derived to all his ordinances: and, we may well say, that, whatsoever is in this case done by God's minister, (the Key not erring) is ratified in heaven.

It cannot, therefore, but be a great comfort and cordial assurance to the penitent soul, to hear the messenger of God, after a careful inquisition into his spiritual estate and true sight of his repentance, in the Name of the Lord Jesus pronouncing to him the full remission of all his sins. And, if either the blessing or curse of a father go deeper with us, than of any other whosoever; although but proceeding from his own private affection, without any warrant from above; how forcibly shall we esteem the (not so much apprecatory, as declaratory) benedictions, of our spiritual fathers, sent to us out of heaven!

Although, therefore, you may, perhaps, through God's goodness, attain to such a measure of knowledge and resolution, as to be able to give yourself satisfaction concerning the state of your soul; yet, it cannot be amiss, out of an abundant caution to take God's minister along with you, and, making him of your spiritual counsel, to unbosom yourself to him freely, for his fatherly advice and concurrence: the neglect whereof, through a kind of either strangeness or mis-conceit, is certainly not a little disadvantageous to the souls of many good Christians. The Romish Laity makes either oracles or idols of their ghostly fathers: if we make cyphers of ours, I know not whether we be more injurious to them or ourselves. We go not about to rack your consciences to a forced and exquisite confession, under the pain of a no-remission; but we persuade you, for your own good, to be more intimate with, and less reserved from, those whom God hath set over you, for your direction, comfort, salvation.

CASE X.

Whether it be lawful, for a man that is not a professed divine, that is, as we for distinction are wont to call him, for a laic person to take upon him to interpret the Scripture.

MANY distinct considerations had need to make way to the answer.

First, it is one thing, for a man to interpret Scripture; another thing, to take upon him the function of preaching the Gospel, which was perhaps in your intention. This is far more large than the other. Every man, that preacheth, interpreteth the Scripture: but, every one, that interprets Scripture, doth not preach. To interpret Scripture, is only to give the sense of a text: but, to preach, is to divide the word aright; to apply it to the conscience of the hearer, and, in an authoritative way, to reprove sin, and denounce judgment against sinners: to lay forth the sweet promises of the Gospel to the faithful and penitent: for the performing whereof, there must be a commission to God's minister, from him, that sends him: upon which the Apostle hath pronounced a *Τίς ἱκανός Who is sufficient for these things?*

Secondly, it must be considered, in what nature, and within what compass, the interpretation is: for, doubtless, the just degrees of callings must be herein duly observed; whether in a public way, as pastors of congregations; or in a private way, as masters of families: whether in the schools, in a mere grammatical way; or in the church, in a predicatory.

Thirdly, it must be considered, as what the calling, so what the gifts are of the interpreter: for, surely, mere interpretation doth not depend upon the profession, but upon the faculty of the undertaker; whether he be learned or ignorant; whether skilful in languages and arts (which certainly must be required in whosoever would put forth his hand to so holy and great a work), or whether inexpert in both. Where these gifts of interpretation and eminent endowments of learning are found, there can be no reason of restraining them from an exercise so beneficially edificatory to the Church of God: without which, the truth of Christian Religion had wanted much, both of her vigour and lustre, in all generations. How famously is it known, that Origen, before his entering into Holy Orders, even at eighteen years of his age, entered into that great work of his catechisings! Apollos, the Alexandrian, *was an eloquent man, and mighty in Scriptures, and taught diligently the things of the Lord;* yet knew nothing but the baptism of John, till Aquila and Priscilla took him to task, and *more perfectly expounded to him the way of God;* Acts xviii. 24, 25. And, what happy use it pleased God to make of laic hands, for both the defence and propagation of the Gospel, we need no other witness than St. Jerome; who hath memorized amongst the primitive Christians, Aristides, Agrippa, Hegesippus, Justin, Musanus, Modestinus, both

the Apollonii, Heraclius, Maximus, and many others, whom God raised up amongst the learned laity of those times, to apologize for Christianity. And, in the last foregoing age, how scarce removed out of our sight, are Laurentius Valla, both the Earls of Mirandula, Capnio, Fagius, Erasmus, Faber, and the rest of those famous way-makers to the succeeding restitution of the evangelical truth! And, what a treasure in this kind had the Church of God lost, if it should have missed the learned Annotations upon the Scripture, derived to us from the hands of Mercerus, Joseph Scaliger, Drusius, both Causabons, Tilenus, Grotius, Heinsius, Selden, and such other expert philologists, never initiated into Sacred Orders?

Fourthly, due and serious consideration must be had of the interpretation itself; that it be genuine and orthodox: for there can be nothing in the world more dangerous than to mis-construe God speaking to us in his word; and to affix upon his Divine Oracles a sense of our own, quite dissonant from the intention of that Spirit of Truth.

Care, therefore, must be taken, that the interpretation given, be every way conform to the analogy of faith, and fully accordant to other Scripture.

The neglect whereof, through either ignorance or misprision hath bred many foul and perilous solecisms in divinity. To give you a taste of too full a dish:—In the xviiith of Ecclesiasticus *, where the Vulgate reads, "He, that lives for ever, created all things at once," some, and those no mean ones, of the Ancient, followed also by later interpreters, have been mis-led into an ungrounded conceit of an instantany and entire creation of the world, and all the parts thereof, in the first moment of time; whereas the Scripture hath expressly and punctually set down the several six days, wherein each part of it was distinctly formed: which those misconstruers are fain to understand of the distinct notifications given to the angels, concerning this almighty work: and what curious subtleties have been hereupon raised by our School-Divines †, is more fit to be past over with an unpleasing smile, than to be seriously recounted: whereas, the intention of the place, is only to signify that God made all things in the universal world, that have any being; intimating, not the time of creation, but, as our Version hath it, the generality of things created ‡. What advantage the blasphemous Arians have formerly taken from the mis-interpretation of Proverbs viii. 22. where Wisdom is brought in, by the mistaking of some Antients, to say, *The Lord created* § *me*, instead of *possessed me, in the beginning of his way, before his works of old*, is more worthy of indignation, than any farther prosecution. But, most pregnant and notable is the gross misprision of a late famous schoolman, Franciscus d' Arriba, confessor to the late queen mother of France; who, to maintain that new way of reconciling that

* Eccl. xviii. 1. Ἔκτισε τὰ πάντα κοινῇ. † κοινῇ, *communiter*, Mont.
‡ Estii Annotat. in locum. § Prov. viii. 22. קנה.

scholastical difference among the Roman Doctors, concerning the effectual aid of divine grace, depending or not depending upon free will (about which he had sixty days' disputation with Cardinal Ascoly and Cardinal Bellarmin; shewing how it might well be maintained without the devices of physical predeterminations, or that *scientia media* of our late Jesuits) relies chiefly for his opinion upon that text of Isaiah xlv. 11. *Hæc dicit Dominus, Sanctus Israelis, qui fecit ventura*: Thus saith the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, who hath made things to come;* following a mis-edition of the Vulgate, which perverts the sense, by making a wrong stop in the sentence: whereas their own Montanus, and any other that hath but seen the Hebrew Text, would read it; *Hæc dicit Dominus, Sanctus Israelis, qui fecit eum; Ventura interrogate me: Thus saith the Lord, the Holy One of Israel; and his Maker: Ask me of things to come concerning my sons, &c:* referring the *ventura, things to come,* to the following interrogate. So Poza, the late extravagant doctor of Spain, in the maintenance of his novel opinions against Fathers and Councils, pressed against him, stands upon his defence, out of the Synod of Constantinople, Act. 5. grounded upon the words of miscalled Solomon; *Beatus, qui prædicat verbum inauditum;* Ecclus. xxv. 9. "Blessed is he, that preaches a word unheard of;" corrupting both the Text and the Council: whereas it should be read, *verbum inauditum obedientis*: and the Council hath it aright, εἰς ἀκοὴν ὑπακούοντος: as ours turns it likewise, "Well is he, that speaketh in the ears of them, that will hear." It were easy to fill a just volume, with instances of this kind.

To this purpose, it will be requisite to make use of all those helps, that may enable an interpreter to understand the Scriptures; whether those that are internal in itself, or external from other supplies.

Of the former kind, are a diligent sifting of the context and inference, and a careful comparing and conferring of one Scripture with another: for all truths agree with themselves; and this word of God is the sun, that gives us light to see itself.

External: where it will be needful to call, both for the aid of arts and tongues; and for the testimonies and judgments of reverend antiquity, and the not-to-be-neglected authority of modern doctors; and, thirdly, a due regard of those golden rules of interpreting, which are recommended to posterity by the learned pens of Clemens of Alexandria, Jerome, Augustin, Gerson, Hyperius, Illyricus, Jacobus Matthias, and others; which, as meet for a volume apart, may not expect to find a room in so concise a tractate.

The want and neglect of all which requisites, what strange work it must needs make with the simple and unlettered, we may well conceive, when great clerks have hereupon bewrayed so foul and palpable miscarriage.

Albinus, the learned master of Charles the Great, writing upon John, finding it said of Judas, that, *having received the sop, he went*

* Vulg. Tra. Isa. xlv. 11.

immediately out; et erat nox, and it was night; puts both together, as spoken of Judas. "He," saith he, "was the night, that went out: as Christ is the day, that gives knowledge to his disciples that were day too; so Judas, the night, gives knowledge to the Jews, that were night, of a traitorous wickedness &c *."

What work Bernard †, who shewed in this that he saw not all things, makes of *Dæmonium meridianum*, "the noon-day Devil," in one of his sermons, is evident to be seen: yet, had he been as well seen in language as he was fervent in his devotion, he had spared that discourse, as raised from a mere ungrounded interpretation; there being no Devil in the text, but a phantasm of his deluded imagination.

And, if I should set forth the descants, that our Postillers run upon the names of Job's three daughters, I should seem to you as apt to sport in so serious a subject: and, if I could think it worth the labour of gathering up the wide senses, far-fetched allegories, absurd inferences, that ignorant Friars have fastened upon Scripture, it is not a small skin, that would contain that tome.

Surely, that man, whosoever he be, that would be hoising sail in these deeps of Scripture, had need to be well ballasted, and well tackled, and skilful in the compass; else, he will have much ado to escape a wreck. He, that will walk in paths of danger, had need to have his eyes about him: a hood-winked man may easily be carried against a post: and he, that hath not light enough to see his own way, had need to take heed whom he trusts.

He, that would blindfold follow those very interpretations, which the Church of Rome hath commended for authentical, would run into foul and dangerous absurdities. Let me single out some few, confessed by their own Estius and Lucas Brugensis: such, as are plainly contradictions to Scripture, and do, as it were, give the lie to God's Spirit.

Such is that 2 Sam. viii. 18. *Filii autem David sacerdotes erant: The sons of David were priests:* whereas, every child knows the Scripture frequently tells us none could be priests, but of Aaron's order and tribe, out of Levi's loins; and that David was of the house of Judah. The Septuagint rightly turns it ἀνὰ ἄρχα ‡.

Again, who, that shall find it in the Vulgate interpretation, *David desperabat &c. David despaired* that he could escape from the face of Saul, would not infer, that he utterly distrusted God's assurance, by the Prophet, of his future kingdom? whereas, the Original is, by Estius's own confession, *festinabat;* as we also turn it, *David made haste to get away, &c.* 1 Sam. xxiii. 26.

He, that should find it reported of one of the sons of Er, *qui stare fecit solem, he that made the sun to stand still;* 1 Chr. iv. 22. would justly wonder what kind of man this was, that had been so long obscured from the world, and yet should have done so strange

* *Erat autem ipse nox.* † Ps. xci. 6. Bern. Ser. 33.

‡ The word in the original is כהנים, which every man knows to be used, ordinarily, to signify either *Principes*, or *Sacerdotes;* as Exod. ii. 16.

a miracle as never was done but by Joshua: whereas, he, that looks into the text, shall find no mention at all of the sun; but only of the mere proper name of Jochim, the son of Er.

He, that shall read in Job, where God speaks of the Leviathan, *Cum sublatus fuerit* (i.e. Leviathan) *timebunt angeli, et territi purgabuntur; When he raiseth up himself, the angels shall fear, and being terrified shall be purged;* Job xli. 25. would sure think this whale were the Devil, as some ancients have mistaken him: and may well wonder, how the good angels, being celestial spirits, could be capable of fear, or how the evil angels could be capable of purging: when the text hath no mention nor thought of Angels *; but only signifying the strength and terribleness of the whale, expresses it in these words; *When he raiseth up himself, the mighty are afraid; by reason of breakings they purify themselves.*

Solomon was faulty enough in his idolatry; but he, that shall read, 1 Kings xi. 5., in the Vulgate interpretation, that he went after Chamosh the god of the Moabites, shall add one idol more to him than we find him guilty of.

Solomon was, in his holy and regular times, 1 Kings iv. 32., full of heavenly meditations and divine ditties; but he, that should follow the Vulgate interpretation, would fasten upon him almost four thousand † more than ever he owned.

After that Merab, Saul's eldest daughter, was given to Adriel the Meholathite, 1 Sam. xviii. 20. contrary to engagement; he, that will follow the Vulgate ‡, must say, that David straight fell in love with Michal, the other sister: whereas, the text tells us, that Michal fell in love with him.

He, that should find in the Vulgate construction, that Saul sung all the day naked before Samuel in Naioth, would think his new prophesying had put him into a merry vein; 1 Sam. xix. 24: whereas, the text only tells us, that he fell down stripped of his wonted clothes.

He, that should find in the Vulgate, Ps. lxxi. 15., David reporting of himself *non novi literaturam, I know no learning*, would wonder at the Prophet's disparagement of his skill, who had elsewhere professed himself wiser than his teachers: whereas, all, that he says, is, that the mercies and blessings of God upon him have been so many, that he knows not the numbers thereof §.

He, that should find the seven angels in the Revelation *vestitos lapide, clothed with stone* ‖, would sure think them buried: whereas, the text is, *clothed in pure white linen* ¶.

And what, do you imagine, would a plain reader think of that charge of the Wise Man, *Noli velle mentiri omne mendacium;* "Be not willing to lie all manner of lies?" Eccles. vii. 13. Would he not

* Where doubtless אילים was mistaken for אלהים, which title is sometimes given to the Angels.

† *Quinque millia*, for *mille et quinque:* five thousand, for a thousand and five.

‡ *Cecinit*, for *cecidit.* § The word is ספרות numeros.

‖ Rev. xv. 6. λίθον ἴσσο χιῖνα. Suid. ¶ ἐνδεδυμένοι λίνον, Rev. xv. 6.

straight say, "Some, belike, I am allowed to lie?" whereas, the words are peremptory, even in Estius's reading, according to ours; "Use not to make any manner of lies."

Yea that very correction of the Vulgate interpretation, which Brugensis allows and magnifies, 1 Cor. xv. 51. with what safety can it pass the judicious; while he reads, *Omnes quidem resurgemus, sed non omnes immutabimur; We shall all rise again, but we shall not all be changed?* For, how can those rise again, that never died? how are those capable of a resurrection, which are only changed? Whereas, the just sense runs *, according to our Version, *We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed:* for those, that are found alive at our Saviour's second coming, shall not sleep in death; yet, both they and the formerly dead must undergo a change.

I could utterly weary you with instances. How must he, that reads the Apocryphal Ecclesiasticus, needs say, that this man, how obscure soever in his authority, saw more and clearer than all the acknowledged prophets of the Old Testament! for he hath foretold us expressly the very name of our Lord Jesus, which none of them ever, beforehand, published: for he, speaking of the deep sea, is read in the Vulgate to say, *Plantavit illum Dominus Jesus*, "The Lord Jesus planted it;" Eccles. xliii. 23. I shame to think what sport a Jew will make of such a gross mistaking: wherein Ιησας, Jesus, is misread for Νησας, islands, so as the right sense is only this, "God, by his counsel, appeaseth the deep, and planteth islands therein."

But I forbear: only, if you have too much leisure, you may be pleased to cast your eye upon the margin †.

In these and many more, for I meant to give you but an essay, the mistakes are important, and such as make no small change in the text: which I have therefore produced, that I might let you see how easy it is for a man, that takes all things upon trust, to be

* ἐ pro οὐ.

† Neh. vi. 2. *Percutiamus fœdus in vitulis, in campo uno:* for *in viculis, in campo, Ono.*—*Anni nostri sicut aranea meditabuntur;* Ps. xc. 9: for, *as a tale that is told.*—*Concupiscentia spadonis devirginabit juvenculam;* Eccles. xx. 4.—*super*, for *subter;* Gen. xxxv. 8.—*vulnera*, for *ulcera;* Ex. ix. 9.—*distinctum*, for *bis tinctum;* Ex. xxxix. 28.—*sanctuarii*, for *sancto atrii;* Lev. vi. 16.—*tonsis*, for *tusis;* Lev. xxii. 24.—*neque*, for *atque;* Lev. xxv. 11.—*solis*, for *salis;* Deut. xxix. 23.—*non fuerit*, for *fuerit;* Jos. ii. 18.—*Occidentalem*, for *Orientalem;* Jos. xii. 3.—*hamata*, for *squamata;* 1 Sam. xvii. 5.—*vagi habitabunt*, for *pagi habitabantur;* 1 Sam. xxvii. 8.—*Judam*, for *ludam;* 2 Sam. vi. 22.—*tumultum*, for *tumultum;* 2 Sam. xviii. 29.—*lapides seculi*, for *sæculi;* Prov. xvi. 11.—*ad alia*, for *ad alta;* Prov. xxvi. 2.—*sponsa*, for *speciosa;* Cant. ii. 13.—*adultera*, for *adulta;* Ecclus. xlii. 9.—*infidelem*, for *fidelem;* Isa. xvii. 10.—*imitantes*, for *irritantes: terra*, for *ter;* Ecclus. xlviii. 2, 3.—*obsurduit*, for *obsordut;* Isa. xxxiii. 9.—*imprudentem*, for *impudentem;* Ib. v. 19.—*faunis sicariis*, for *fatuis sicariis;* Jer. l. 39.—*vinctas*, for *tinctas;* Ezek. xxiii. 15.—*ejiciat*, for *mittat;* Matt. ix. 38.—*angelus*, for *angulus;* Zech. x. 4.—*servivit*, for *servavit;* Hos. xii. 12.—*confessus*, for *confusus;* Mark viii. 38.—*sexta*, for *tertia;* Mark xv. 25.—*Mytelem*, for *Melita;* Acts xxviii. 1.—*compellebantur*, for *complebantur;* Luke viii. 23.—*placuerunt*, for *laluerunt;* Heb. xiii. 2.—*adduxistis*, for *addixistis;* James v. 6.—*in carne*, for *in carcere;* 1 Pet. iii. 19.—*appropinquabit*, for *appropinquavit;* 1 Pet. iv. 7.—*tubarum*, for *turbarum;* Rev. xix. 1.—*de igne Chaldæorum*, for *de Ur Chaldæorum;* Neh. ix. 7.

abused by his credulity; and how unsafe it is, much more for an unexpert and injudicious person, to meddle with the Holy Oracles of the Almighty *.

The conclusion then must be, that, however it may be lawful for the eminently learned, either in schools or families, according as their calling may warrant them, to interpret even difficult Scriptures, and to untie the knots of a text: yet, since not many are thus qualified; and those, that are so qualified, if they neglect to follow the prescribed rules may easily miscarry, to the great peril both of their own souls, and others; I should therefore advise, that this may be the act of but some few choice persons, and of them with all possible caution; and that ordinary Christians, if they have a desire, besides all fundamental truths which are laid down openly and clearly in the sacred word of God, to inform themselves in those darker verities which lie hidden in more obscure scriptures, to have recourse to their learned and faithful pastors; and rather to rest in that light, which they shall receive from their well-digested instructions, than to rely upon their own (perhaps confident, but much weaker) judgment.

* In compiling the above formidable catalogue of errors chargeable on the Vulgate, the author has evidently used a very incorrect edition of that version: and he has hence, unwittingly, attributed many mistakes to the translation, which were mere errors of the press in his copy. Of the fifty-three places above enumerated as faulty, the four following are not errors at all: Lev. xxv. 11. *neque*, is agreeable to the Hebrew: Prov. xxvi. 2. *ad alia* is as consonant to the Hebrew as *ad alta:* Jer. l. 39. *faunis sicariis* is *faunis ficariis* in Sixtus's edition, and they are both obscure renderings of an obscure Hebrew word אִיִּים; but either of them is as good, if not better, than the Author's *faunis fatuis:* Hos. xii. 12. *servivit* accords with the Hebrew, which *servavit* does not. The following eleven are errors found in the original edition of Sixtus, as the Bishop has quoted them: viz. 2 Sam. viii. 18. 1 Sam. xxiii. 26. 1 Chr. iv. 22. Job xli. 25. Ps. lxxi. 15. Ecclus. vii. 13. 1 Cor. xv. 51. Ps. xc. 9. Ecclus. xx. 4. Gen. xxxv. 8. Neh. ix. 7. The remaining thirty-eight are errors of the press, not found in Sixtus's edition. EDITOR.

RESOLUTIONS.

THE FOURTH DECADE.

CASES MATRIMONIAL.

CASE I.

Whether the marriage of a son or daughter, without or against the parent's consent, may be accounted lawful.

MATRIMONY, though not a sacrament, yet a sacred institution of God, for the comfort and propagation of mankind, is so fruitful of questions, as that Sanchez *, the Jesuit, hath stuffed a huge volume with them alone. It were pity, that so many should, in that estate, be necessary.

We meddle not with those secret, and (some of them) immodest curiosities; contenting ourselves only with those, which meet us every day in the ordinary practice of men: whereof this, which you have moved, may well challenge the first place: a question, wherein I was vehemently pressed in my late western charge, by some persons of greatest eminency in those parts, upon occasion of some of their children undutifully carving for themselves in the choice of their matches. The offended parents, in the height of their displeasure, were very earnest to invalidate and annul the marriage. I gave them, in effect, the same account of the point, which now I give to you: That this disallowed marriage was one of those things, which are unjust and unlawful to be done; but, being once done, are valid.

How unwarrantable and injurious it is in the child, to match himself without or against the parent's consent, there needs no other judge, than the law of nature itself; which teacheth us, that the child is no other, than the peculiar goods and living substance of

* Thom. è Sanchez, Societ. Jes. Theol. *De Matrimonio.*

the parent: yea, as some civilians* have taught us to express it, he is *pars viscerum matris*, "a part of the mother's bowels," and part of the purest substance of the father; and, therefore, ought no more to be exempted from the parent's power of disposing, than the very limbs of his own body.

Upon this ground it was, that, by the Law of God †, it was lawful for the Jews, in case of extremity, to sell, as themselves, so their children also to servitude; but to those only of their own nation.

And in the Law Civil‡ there is the like permission, although under certain conditions; and particularly, in an utter exigency, *victûs causâ*. To the latter whereof, some expositors ‖ hold so strictly, as that they will not admit this to be done for the redemption of the parent from death or perpetual bondage; but only to preserve him from aflamishing: wherein, certainly, they are over-strait laced, and too much wedded to syllables; it being questionless the intention of the Law, to comprehend all equally-pressing necessities. To which they add, that this must be only in the father's power; and that, to a child not emancipated, and left to his own disposing. It is not in my way to dispute the case with them: take it at the easiest, it sufficiently shews the great power, that nature itself yields to the parent over the child. By how much stronger, then, the parent's interest is in the child, so much more wrongful it must needs be in the child to neglect his parents in finally bestowing himself; and, if we look into the positive Law of God§, we shall find the child so wholly left to the parent's will and disposition, as that he may, at his pleasure, dispense with or frustrate the vow of his child made to God himself.

Neither do the Roman Doctors¶ generally hold otherwise, this day, in case of an under-age. And some of them extend this power yet further: yet not without a distinction; holding, that, after the age of puberty, those vows only are in the mercy of the father, which may be prejudicial to the government of the family, and paternal power: which is sufficient for my purpose, in the question in hand.

And, although those Casuists do sufficiently doat upon their Monkery, and the vows thereto appertaining; yet they ascribe so much to the bond of filial duty, as that they teach**, That a son, which, his parents being in extreme need and wanting his help, enters into a Religious Order; or comes not out of it, though professed, when he might be likely, by his coming forth, to be aidful to his said parents; is guilty of a sin against the Fifth Commandment: so as, even with them, the respect to a parent ought to

* Jacob. Leoniss. Consil. Matrimon. 49. † Exod. xxi. 7. Deut. xv. 12, 13.
‡ L. 6. c. *De patribus qui, &c.* ‖ Covarruv. l. iii. var. c. 14. ex Accursio et alius. Less. l. ii. c. 5. Dub. 4. § Num. xxx. 3, 4, 5, 6. ¶ Less. de Jure l. ii. c. 40. dub. 11. ** Navar. Enchir. 4. præ. c. 14. n. 14. *Filius, qui parentibus in extremâ necessitate constitutis, &c.*

overweigh a vow of religion; although consummate by a solemn profession.

But, that you may not object to me the age of the Law, as therefore abrogated because Mosaical, hear what the Chosen Vessel says, under the new Law of the Gospel.

If any man think, that he behaveth himself uncomely towards his virgin, if she pass the flower of her age, and need so require, let him do what he will, he sinneth not; let her marry; 1 Cor. vii. 36. *Nevertheless, he, that standeth stedfast in his heart, having no necessity; but hath power over his own will, and hath so decreed in his heart, that he will keep his virgin, doth well, &c.* v. 37. Lo, the Apostle supposeth it in the parent's power, either to keep his daughter a virgin, or to dispose of her in marriage: she is not her own, either to hold or give; but must be altogether ordered by the superior will of a parent. Not that any force is allowed, either way, to be used towards the daughter; whether to continue her in a constrained virginity, or to call her against her mind upon a disaffected match: no; that God, who disposeth all things sweetly, would have us do so too: he allows parents to be rulers of their children, but not tyrants. What they do, therefore, in this kind, must be more by counsel, than command; and with more sway of love, than authority. Thus, consulting wisely with the state of times, and the child's disposition and abilities of containing, must the parent either keep his virgin, or labour for the provision of a meet consortship. Thus did the two great Patriarchs of God's antient Church, Abraham and Isaac, provide fit matches for their holy seed; while the unholy provided unfit matches for themselves. Thus did their godly issue, in all generations, take their parents along with them, in the choice of meet yoke-fellows; while the godless, whether out of impetuous lust or stubborn disobedience, affect, with Esau, (Gen. xxviii. 6, 7, 8.) to be their own purveyors, to the great regret and heart-breaking of their parents.

Lastly, the latitude, that St. Paul gives of the liberty of marriage to all Christians, is, *Tantùm in Domino; only in the Lord;* 1 Cor. vii. 39. Now, how can that marriage be in the Lord, which is against him? and how can that be other than against the Lord, which is against the Lord's commandment? and what commandment can be more express, than *Honour thy father and thy mother?* Gal. vi. 1: and, *Children, obey your parents?* v. 2: and what can be more contrary to the honour and obedience due to parents, than to neglect them in the main business that concerns our lives? and what business can concern our life so much, as the choice of a meet partner, with whom we may comfortably wear out all the days of our pilgrimage on earth?

Doubtless, then, we may, in a generality, safely conclude, that it is altogether unlawful for a child to slight his parent's consent, in the choice of his marriage. There may be some particular cases incident, wherein perhaps this may without sin or blame be forborne: as, when the child, either by general permission or former elocation, shall be out of the parent's disposing: or, where the

parent is defective in his intellectuals: or, where the child lives *in remotis*, out of the compass of intelligence: or, where the parent, being averse from the true religion, denies his consent to match with any but those of his own strain; or shall, upon other by-occasions, wilfully stand upon so unreasonable terms, that neither friends nor authority can overrule him. But, where these or the like preponderating exceptions do not intervene, the child cannot without sin balk the parent's consent to his choice in marriage.

But, though such marriages, without or against consent, be not lawfully made; yet, being once made, they are valid. The Civil Law*, out of the grounds of policy, goes herein too far, which sentenceth those marriages void, which are made without the consent of parents or guardians. But, as matrimony hath something in it of nature; something, of civility; something, of divinity, as instituted by God, and by him to be regulated: so, sure this last interest ought to oversway the other two. The marriage, therefore, thus made, being, though faulty, yet true; is, doubtless, after consummation indissoluble. The party's repentance and the parent's sorrow, may have leisure to afflict them; no power, to relieve them.

CASE II.

Whether marriage lawfully made, may admit of any cause of divorce, save only for the violation of the marriage-bed, by fornication or adultery.

Our Saviour hath so punctually decided the case, in his Divine Sermon upon the Mount, that I cannot but wonder at the boldness of any man, who calls himself a Christian, that dares raise a question, after so full and clear a determination from the mouth of Truth itself. *Whosoever*, saith he, *shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery; and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced, committeth adultery;* Matt. v. 32.

Yet I find this, so evident an assertion, checked by two sorts of adversaries: the one, certain wild Novellists, who admit of very slight causes of separation; the other, Romish Doctors, who plead for some other main and important additions to this liberty of divorce.

I have heard too much of, and once saw a licentious pamphlet thrown abroad in these lawless times, in the defence and encouragement of divorces (not to be sued out; that solemnity needed not; but) to be arbitrarily given by the disliking husband, to his displeasing and unquiet wife; upon this ground, principally, That marriage was instituted for the help and comfort of man: where therefore the match proves such, as that the wife doth but pull down a side; and, by her innate peevishness, and either sullen or

* *Matrimonia esse irrita, &c.* Instit. de Nuptiis, et ff. de Jure Nuptiarum. Ita et Evarist. in Constit. edita Anno C. 100.

pettish and froward disposition, brings rather discomfort to her husband; the end of marriage being hereby frustrate, why should it not, saith he, be in the husband's power, after some unprevailing means of reclamation attempted, to procure his own peace, by casting off this clog; and to provide for his own peace and contentment, in a fitter match?

Woe is me! to what a pass is the world come, that a Christian, pretending to reformation, should dare to tender so loose a project to the public! I must seriously profess, when I first did cast my eye upon the front of the book, I supposed some great wit meant to try his skill in the maintenance of this so wild and improbable a paradox: but, ere I could have run over some of those too-well-penned pages, I found the author was in earnest; and meant seriously to contribute this piece of good counsel, in way of reformation, to the wise and seasonable ear of superiors.

I cannot but blush for our age, wherein so bold a motion hath been, amongst others, admitted to the light. What will all the Christian Churches through the world, to whose notice those lines shall come, think of our woeful degeneration in these deplored times, that so uncouth a design should be set on foot amongst us? Or, how can they construe it other than a direct contradiction to our Saviour's sentence, in maintaining that practice, which he expressly professeth to oppose?

For, what was the Jewish guise here checked by our Saviour, but a voluntary repudiation of a lawful wife upon the terms of dislike, other than fornication? Their mis-interpretation of the Law alluded unto, argues no less. The Law alluded unto is that of Deuteronomy, where God says, *When a man hath taken a wife, and hath been her husband; and it shall be, that she find not grace in his eyes, because he hath found in her matter of nakedness *; he shall write her a bill of divorcement, and send her away;* Deut. xxiv. 1: whereupon he infers, with an *Ego dico, I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for fornication, causeth her to commit adultery.* The matter of nakedness therefore, for which the Jews were then wont to divorce their wives, and offended in so divorcing them, was any other displeasing quality, besides the breach of wedlock through bodily uncleanness; for which only had they dismissed their wives, our Saviour had neither faulted their gloss nor their practice.

So as herein Christ, the Giver of the Law, decides one of those great controversies, which were agitated between the emulous schools of Sammai and Hillel: determining, on Sammai's side, that for no other nakedness but that of adultery it was lawful to divorce a wife; and flatly condemning, by the like answer, that πᾶσαν αἰτίαν, (Matt. xix. 3.) *every cause* of repudiation then ordinarily received, as it was by the Pharisee purposely propounded unto him.

Answerable whereunto is that of the Prophet Malachi, who, in our just reading, hath so fully decided the cause, as if it had been

* ערות דבר

expressly referred to his umpirage. *The Lord,* saith he, *hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously: yet is she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant;* Mal. ii. 14. Lo, the wife of thy covenant, therefore too surely settled to be turned off upon every slight occasion. What! was thy covenant to take her for thy wife, till thou shouldst dislike her? What were this, but to mock God and the world? Thy covenant implies no less than firmitude and perpetuity. *Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth: For the Lord, the God of Israel, saith, that he hateth putting away: for one covereth violence with his garment, saith the Lord of Hosts: therefore take heed to your spirit, that you deal not treacherously;* vv. 15, 16. What is this treachery, which the Prophet cries out against thus vehemently, thrice over with a breath, but pretended and unjust suggestions against a lawful wife, for her undue divorce? and what is that violence, but the injurious execution of those suggestions? upon which unsufficient grounds, the Lord professes to hate putting away.

Yea, how apparently contrary is this practice, to the very original institution of marriage itself! He, that made it in paradise, ordained thus: *Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they two shall be one flesh;* Gen. ii. 24. Lo, before ever there was father, or mother, or son in the world, God hath appointed, that the bonds betwixt husband and wife shall be more strait and indissoluble, than betwixt the parent and child; and can any man be so unreasonable, as to defend it lawful, upon some unkind usages or thwartness of disposition, for a parent to abandon and forsake his child, or the son to cast off his parent? much less, therefore, may it be thus betwixt a husband and wife. *They two are one flesh.* Behold here an union of God's making: a man's body is not more his own, than his wife's body is his: and will a man be content to part easily with a piece of himself? Or, can we think that God will endure an union made by himself to be slightly dissolved? Or, how is this bodily matrimony a lively image of the spiritual marriage betwixt Christ and his Church (who hath said, *I will betroth thee unto me for ever: yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies;* Hos. ii. 19.) if, upon small occasions, it may be subject to utter dissolution.

Yea, what speak I of divinity? Even modest heathens would hiss this libertinism off the stage. Amongst the rest, what a fool was Socrates! The oracle, belike, called him the wisest man of his time; but what a fool was he, to endure the unquiet clack of his Xantippe with such cool patience, if he might have quit himself of the trouble with a sudden act of her dismission? Or, what use was there of those delegates of Athens, and the Harmosyni of Lacedæmon, for the piecing up of these domestic breaches betwixt husband and wife, if the imperious husband had power to right himself by turning the scold out of doors?

Lastly, what silly counsel was that, which the Jewish Rabbi gave

to his client, matched with a shrew; "The bone, that is fallen to thy lot, that do thou gnaw upon;" if it were altogther free for him, to leave that bone, and take another!

But I have dwelt too long on so gross a subject.

There may yet seem some better colour for the plea of the Romish Doctors, which admit infidelity and heresy into the rank of those causes, which may warrant a divorce.

But herein the ambiguity of the word, if heed be not taken, may deceive you. The Hebrew Text, to which our Saviour alludes, uses a word, which signifies *excision*, or *cutting off**; the Greek, *a departing away*, or *putting off*†: the Latin, *Divortium*, in his true sense is not so heinous as either of the other, signifying rather *a turning aside*; but, in our ordinary acception, amounts to no less than both. But what unjust difference they make betwixt final separation and dissolution, we shall find in our next discourse.

Onwards, that such separation may not be made of man and wife, lawfully joined together, for heresy or misbelief; we need no other conviction, than that peremptory and clear determination of our Saviour, which we have formerly insisted on: for, though his words on the Mount were in the way of doctrinal assertion; yet, afterwards, the same words were used by him, in way of a satisfactory answer to the Pharisees' question concerning causes of divorce; professedly resolving, that there could be no allowable ground of such separation, except fornication.

What words can be more plain? It is but a shift, to say, as the Cardinal doth, that our Saviour here meant only to express the proper cause of the separation of married persons, which is the breach of marriage faith: as having no occasion to speak of those general grounds, which reach to the just sundering of all human societies; such as heresy and infidelity, which are enough to unglue all natural and civil relations betwixt father and son, master and servant, husband and wife: for it is clear, that neither question nor answer were bounded with any particularities. The Pharisee asks, *Whether for every cause?* Our Saviour answers, *For no cause but fornication.*

And it is spoken beside the book, that child or servant should or may forsake parent or master, in case of heresy or infidelity. St. Paul teacheth other doctrine: *Let as many servants as are under the yoke* (of bondage) *count their* (infidel) *masters worthy of all honour;* 1 Tim. vi. 1: not worthy, therefore, of desertion and disclamation. And, if the servants may not shake off the bonds of duty, much less may the son break or file off the bonds of nature. And, as for the matrimonial knot, how too sure it is, to be loosed by infidelity itself, let the Apostle speak: *If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away;* 1 Cor. vii. 12. *And the woman, which hath a husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him;* v. 13.

* Deut. xxiv. 1. כריתת † Βιβλίον ἀποστασίου.

And if even Infidelity have not power to disoblige the wife or husband, much less Heresy.

In this pretended case, therefore, to separate from board and bed, is no better than a presumptuous insolence. It is the peremptory charge of Christ, *What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder;* Matt. xix. 6. In all lawful marriages, it is God, that joins the hands and hearts of the married: how dare man, then, undo the work of God, upon devices of his own? Had the Lord ever said, "If thy wife be a wilful misbeliever, rid thy hands of her;" this separation were just: but, now that his charge is clean contrary, what an impious sauciness is it, to disjoin those, whom God hath united!

As, therefore, it is not in the power of any third person, upon any whatsoever pretence, violently to break the sacred bond of marriage: so neither may the husband or wife enthral each other, by a wilful desertion; whether upon pretext of religion, or any secular occasion. In which case, what is to be done must come under a further disquisition. Certainly, it was never the intention of the holy and wise God, by virtue of that which was ordained for man's comfort and remedy of sin, to bind him to a remediless misery: which must necessarily fall out, if, upon the departure of an unbelieving or heretical yokefellow, the relict party must be tied up to a perpetual necessity of either containing, if he can; or, if he cannot, of burning. The wise Doctor of the Gentiles well foresaw the dangerous inconvenience, that must needs hereupon ensue; and hath given order for prevention, accordingly. *But, if the unbelieving depart, let him depart: a brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases; but God hath called us to peace;* 1 Cor. vii. 15. Not, that it is free for a man or woman so forsaken, to carve him or herself of redress: what an infinite confusion would follow upon such licentiousness! but that, after long and patient expectation, and all probable means used for the reduction of the party deserting, recourse be had, as to the last refuge, to public Ecclesiastical Authority, which is the fittest to manage these matrimonial affairs: in whose power it may be, either, by grave admonitions and just censures, to bring back the offender to his duty; or, upon his continuing contempt, to set a day for the publication of the just freedom of the forsaken: wherein they shall do no other, than execute that apostolic sentence, for exemption from an unjust bondage, and providing for a just peace.

CASE III.

Whether, after a lawful divorce for adultery, the innocent party may marry again.

Although matrimony be not, according to the Romish tenet, one of those Sacraments, which imprint an indelible character in the

receiver; yet it hath, as they hold, such a secret influence upon the soul, as that it leaves a perpetual bond behind it, never to be dissolved till death: so as those offenders, which, by just censure, are separated from the board and the bed, cannot yet be freed from the bond of marriage.

Upon this ground it is, that they bar the innocent party from the benefit of a second marriage, as supposing the obligation of the former still in force.

In the ordinary Bills of the Jewish Divorce, the repudiated wife had full scope given her of a second choice: as the words ran: "She was to be free, and to have power over her own soul; to go away; to be married to any man, whom she would *" They were not more liberal, than our Romish divorcers are niggardly. The Jewish divorce being upon unwarrantable cause, made their liberality so much more sinful, as their divorce was more unjust: for the divorced woman was still, in right, the lawful wife of that unrighteous husband that dismissed her. The Romish doctrine makes their strait-handedness so much more injurious, as the cause of separation is more just.

Even this question also is expressly determined by our Saviour, in his answer to the Pharisees: *Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and marrieth another, committeth adultery;* Matt. xix. 9. Lo then, he, that for so just a cause as fornication putteth away his wife and marrieth another, committeth not adultery. The exception manifestly implies so much, both in reason and common use.

Neither, indeed, are the words capable of any other probable sense.

That, which Bellarmin would fasten upon it, referring the exception to the former clause of dismission only, so as it might be lawful to divorce only for fornication, but not to marry after divorce; cannot stand without the supply of words of his own, which God never allowed him to intersert; and, besides, utterly destroys the sense, casting such doctrine upon our Saviour, as he would hate to own: for, except that restraint be referred to the marrying again, the sense would run thus, "Whosoever puts away his wife commits adultery," which stands not with truth or reason; since it is not the dismission that is adulterous, but the marriage of another. It is, therefore, the plain drift of our Saviour, to teach the Pharisee, that the marriage of a second wife (after dismission of a former, upon any other cause, except for fornication) is no less than adultery; thereby enforcing, that, upon a just dismission for fornication, a second marriage cannot be branded with adultery.

Neither will it serve his turn, which he would borrow from St. Augustin, that, upon this negative of our Saviour's, we may not look to build an affirmative of our own: for, though it be granted, that he, who, putting away his wife not for fornication, marrieth

* Maimon. Treat. of Divorce.

another, sinneth; yet, it follows not, that he, who, having dismissed his wife for fornication, marrieth another, sinneth not at all. A sin it may be, though not an adultery: for, surely, if it be a sin, it must be against a commandment; and if against any commandment, it must be against the seventh; and what is the seventh commandment, but *Thou shalt not commit adultery?* Besides, the Pharisees' question, *Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?* was not without a plain implication of liberty to marry another: which our Saviour well knowing, gives a full answer, as well to what he meant, as what he said; which had not been perfectly satisfactory, if he had only determined that one part concerning dismission, and not the other concerning marriage: which clause, if two other Evangelists express not, yet it must be fetched necessarily from the third; since it is a sure and irrefragable rule, "That all four Evangelists make up one perfect Gospel." It is, therefore, a very tottering and unsure ground, which our Rhemists build upon; as if the Apostle meant to cross his Lord and Master, when he saith, *The woman, which hath a husband, is bound by the Law to her husband, so long as he liveth;* Rom. vii. 2: therefore, only death can dissolve the bond of marriage; not divorce; not adultery; not divorce, for adultery. For, how plainly do the words carry their answer in themselves! *The woman*, saith the Apostle, *that hath a husband* *: but the woman, legally divorced for fornication, hath no husband. St. Paul speaks of a true wife; not a divorced harlot. He had no occasion here, to look aside at matter of divorce; but takes marriage as in its entire right; rather desiring to urge, for clearing the case of our obligation to the law, that the husband being once dead the wife is free to marry again, than to intimate the case of her incapacity to marry till he be dead.

As for that bond therefore, which is so much stood upon; if it be taken without all relations to the duties of bed and board, it is merely chimerical, nothing but fantasy. There are, or should be bonds of affection, bonds of mutual respects and reciprocal duties betwixt man and wife; and these must hold firm, notwithstanding any local separation: neither time nor place may so much as slacken, much less loose them: but, where a just divorce intervenes, these bonds are chopped in pieces; and no more are, than if they had never been. And, if all relations cease in death, as they do in whatsoever kind, surely divorce, being, as it is, no other than a legal death, doth utterly cut off, as the Hebrew term imports, all former obligations and respects betwixt the parties so finally separated.

The adulterous wife, therefore, duly divorced, being thus dead in law as to her husband, the husband stands now as free as if he had never married: so as I know not why the Apostle should not as well speak to him, as to any other, when he saith, *Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife;* 1 Cor. vii. 2.

Neither is it otherwise, in the case of a chaste wife, after her se-

* So also 1 Cor. vii. 39.

paration from an adulterous husband; Mark x. 12. In these rights, God makes no difference of sexes: both may lawfully claim the same immunities.

Which, certainly, should they be denied to either, must needs draw on very great inconveniences: for, in how hard a condition should the innocent party be, hereupon, left! Either the husband or wife must be forced to live with an adulterous consort: or be tied to a perpetual necessity of either doing that, which perhaps they cannot do, containing; or of suffering that, which they ought not to endure, burning.

What remedy now can be expected of so great a mischief? Our Romish Doctors propose two: Reconciliation, or Continence: both good, where they may be had.

Reconciliation, in case of a seasonable and submiss repentance: that, which is the Apostle's charge in case of desertion, holds here also; καὶ ἀλλαγήτω, *let her be reconciled*: the more heinous the wrong is, the more commendable is the remission.

Continence, after such separation, in case of ability so granted: for, surely, this holy disposition is a gift; and therefore is not had, where it is not bestowed: those, that place it in our power, derogate from the thanks of the Giver: yea, he, that gives it, tells us *all cannot receive it*; Matt. xix. 11. he must not only give it, but give us power to take it.

But, where the offending party is obstinately vicious; and the innocent, after all endeavours, unable to contain, without a supply of marriage; the case is remediless: and we know God's mercy such, as that he leaves no man, for matter of resolution, utterly perplexed.

Shortly, then, I doubt not, but I may, notwithstanding great authorities to the contrary, safely resolve, that, in the case of divorce, it is lawful for the innocent person to marry. But, for that I find the Church of England hitherto somewhat tender in the point *; and this practice, where it rarely falls, generally held, though not sinful, yet of ill report, and obnoxious to various censures. I should, therefore, earnestly advise and exhort those, whom it may concern, carefully and effectually to apply themselves to the fore-mentioned remedies: reconciliation, if it be possible, to prevent a divorce; holy endeavours of a continued continence, if it may be obtained, to prevent a second marriage, after divorce. But, if these prevail not, I dare not lay a load upon any man's conscience, which God hath not burdened: I dare not ensnare those, whom God will have free.

* Decreeing to take bonds of the persons divorced to remain single. Can. 6 Constit. c. 107.

CASE IV.

Whether the authority of a father may reach so far, as to command or compel the child, to dispose of himself in marriage where he shall appoint.

The extent of a paternal power, as we have partly shewed already, hath been wont to be very large; reaching, in some cases, by the Civil Law, to the life of the child; and, by the Jewish Law, to his liberty: so as it might seem much more overruling in case of marriage; which also seems to be intimated by the Apostle, in that he supposes and gives a power to the parent, either to give or keep his virgin.

And, how apt parents are to make use of this awful authority, in matching their children for their own worldly advantage, contrary to their affections and disposition, we have too lamentable experience every day.

Neither is it easy to set forth the mischievous effects, that have followed upon those compelled marriages: for hence ensue perpetual discontentments to the parties so forcedly conjoined; an utter frustration of the end of marriage, which should be mutual comfort; and, not seldom, dangerous machinations against the life of the disaffected consort: as it were too easy to instance, every where. But especially if the affections of the young couple have been before, as it oft falls out, placed elsewhere, what secret heart-burnings, what loathing of conjugal society, what adulterous plottings, do straight follow! what unkind defiances pass between them! how do they wear out their days, in a melancholic pining; and wish each other and themselves dead too soon!

Yea, herein, an imperious or covetous parent may be most injurious to himself; in robbing himself of that comfort, which he might receive from a dutiful child, in her person, in her posterity.

For the avoiding of which mischiefs, it were meet and happy, that both parent and child could both know their limits, which God, and nature, hath set; and keep them.

Let the Child, then, know, that he is his parents': that, as he was once a part of them, in respect of his natural being; so he should be still, in his affections and obsequiousness: and, therefore, that he ought to labour, by all means, to bring his heart unto a conformity to his parent's will and desire; according to that universal rule of the Apostle, *Children, obey your parents in all things; for this is well pleasing unto the Lord;* Col. iii. 20. The word is comprehensive: *in all things.* Things unlawful pass for impossible: we only can do what we ought. In all those things then, which are honest, lawful, just, parents must be obeyed: and the motions for marriage being such, impose upon the child so far a duty of obedience, as that he is bound to work his affections, what he may, to

a compliance with his parent's will: the wilful neglect whereof is no better, than a kind of domestic rebellion.

Let the Parent again consider, that the child, however derived from his loins, is now an entire person in himself: that, though the body came from him, yet the soul was from above: that the soul of his child is endowed with powers and faculties of its own: that, as he is not animated by his parent's spirits; so he is not inwardly swayed by his parent's will or affections: that when his reason comes to be improved, there may be differences of judgment betwixt his parent and him; and from thence may arise a diversity or contrariety of affections and desires; and these affections and passions may grow to such strength, as that he himself shall not be able to master them; and, if the parent feel himself subject to such infirmities, well may he be induced to pity those, whom a vigorous heat of youth hath rendered more headstrong and unruly: withal, let him consider, that, though the child should be advised by the parent, yet it is fit that he should like for himself; that the will is to be led, not driven; that no marriage can be happy, but that, which is grounded in love; that love is so altogether voluntary, that it cannot consist with constraint: lastly, let him know, that the power of the father, though great, yet is not unlimited. It is the charge, which the Father of Mercies hath laid upon all earthly fathers, in their carriage towards their children; *Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath*, or, as the Vulgate reads * it, *to indignation, lest they be discouraged.* And, surely, if there be any thing, wherein the passion of the child may be like to be inordinately stirred, it is in the crossing of an once-well-settled affection, and diverting the stream of love into another channel: for the avoiding whereof, the Imperial Laws have been so indulgent to the child, as that, according to their best glosses, they permit not the father to disinherit the daughter, for chusing a husband not unworthy of herself, though against her father's mind; yea, some of them have gone a step further: but I forbear. How far it may be lawful and fit for the parent to punish the disrespect of a child, in so important a case, is not for me to determine: doubtless, where the provision is arbitrary, the parent will be apt so to manage it, as to make the child sensible of a disobedience; so as both parts herein suffer, and are put into a way of late repentance.

Briefly, therefore, on the one side, the son or daughter do justly offend, if, without cause or wilfully, they refuse the parent's choice: and are in duty bound to work their hearts to an obedient subjection to those, unto whom they owe themselves. And, for this cause, must be wary in suffering their affections to overrun their own reason and their parent's guidance: either suppressing the first motions of unruly passions; or, if they grow impetuous, venting them betimes into the tender ears of their indulgent parents, or discreet and faithful friends; that so they may seasonably prevent their own misery, and their parent's grief.

* Μὴ παροργίζετε. Eph. vi. 4. Μὴ ἐρεθίζετε. Col. iii. 21.

On the other side, the parent shall offend, if, holding too hard a hand over the fruit of his own body, he shall resolve violently to force the child's affections to his own bent: and, where he finds them settled, will rather break than bow them; not caring so much to persuade, as to compel love. These harshnesses have too much of tyranny in them, to be incident to a Christian parent; who must transact all these matrimonial affairs, in a smooth and plausible way of consent and indulgence.

A noble and ancient pattern whereof, we find in the contract betwixt Isaac and his Rebekah; Gen. xxiv. 49, &c. The match was treated on, betwixt Abraham's proxy and the maid's father Bethuel and her brother Laban. The circumstances drew their full consent: all is agreed upon betwixt parents. But, when all this is done, nothing is done till Rebekah have given her assent: they said, *We will call the damsel, and enquire at her mouth*; v. 57. *And they called Rebekah, and said unto her, Wilt thou go with this man? And she said, I will go*; v. 58. Now the contract is made up: till then, all the engagements of Bethuel and Laban were but compliments: till then, all the rich jewels of gold and silver given to the intended bride, and all the precious things given to her mother and brother, were but at the mercy of the receivers.

Neither ought it to be other, in all Christian espousals. The free and cheerful consent of parents and parties makes the match both full and happy. Let not the child dare to cross his parents: let not the parent think to force the child. And, when an undue bargain is, through the heat of passion, made up past reclamation, let love and pity so far intercede for the offenders, that they may smart for their rashness and neglect, without their utter undoing.

CASE V.

Whether the marriage of cousins-german, that is, of brother's or sister's children, be lawful.

The displeasure of the Canon Law against such marriages is so high flown, that no less can take it off, than an utter diremption of them; even though they be not ratified only, but consummate by carnal knowledge. And the grave authority of some ancient and holy Fathers and eminent Doctors of the Church, besides five several Councils, have passed a hard sentence upon them.

The main ground of the supposed unlawfulness, is that clause of God's Law, which was more than judicial: *No man shall approach unto any near of kin to his flesh, to uncover their nakedness: I am the Lord*; Lev. xviii. 6. Which though Cornelius à Lapide *, following his Radulphus, would seem to restrain to the ensuing particularities only; yet they may not think that God will suffer so

* Cor. à Lap. in locum.

universal a charge to be so straitly pent: especially when we know there are divers other no less unlawful copulations omitted in this black roll of uncleannesses, than those which are expressly mentioned; the rest being intended to come in by way of analogy only: for it is easy for any reader to observe, that all the severalities of the degrees prohibited run still upon the male; under which, if the like exorbitances of the other sex were not meant to be comprehended, females should be lawless, and the law imperfect.

To marry, then, with a cousin-german, is apprehended by these Canonists to be an approach to *one near kin to our flesh*; and, therefore, intimated in that inhibition.

Doctor Willet, a man much deserving of God's Church, conceives these marriages to be analogically forbidden in this catalogue of Moses. "For," saith he *, "if the degrees of affinity be limited to the third or fourth degree: as it is not lawful for a man to marry his wife's daughter's daughter; Lev. xviii. 17: why should not the line of consanguinity hold to the fourth degree likewise; and so neither the son to marry his father's brother's daughter, or the daughter the son?" But that worthy Divine did not heedfully observe the great difference betwixt these instanced degrees: for the one of these is in an equal line; the other, in an unequal line: the one is a collateral consanguinity; the other is in a directly descending affinity; so as the husband should be grand-father-in-law to the wife, which in all reason were very unlawful and absurd; since in all those descending degrees there is a kind of reverential inequality betwixt the lower and superior, which abhors from all proportion of a match: whereas the collateral equidistance of cousins-german from the stock whence both descend, hath in it no such appearance of inequality. Certainly, then, no analogy can draw these marriages within the prohibition: whether the nearness of approach to our flesh be a just bar to them, must be farther considered.

Gregory, whom some would fain interest in our English Apostleship, writing to his Augustin † in way of answer to his Interrogations, puts these marriages in the same rank with the marriages of brothers and sisters; which he brands with this note, that they seldom ever prove fruitful.

As for those of brothers and sisters, which were usual, as Diodorus Siculus tells us amongst the Egyptians, and are this day in use in barbarous nations; nature itself abominates the mention of them. In the first plantation of the world, there was a necessity of them; as without which, there could have been no human generation: but, afterwards, as the earth grew more peopled, so these matches grew still more odious. Like as it was also in the first plantation of the Church; the holy seed being confined to a narrow compass, were forced, unless they would join with infidels, to match sometimes overnear to themselves: as even Abraham him-

* Will. Syno. Controver. 15. de Matr. q. 3. † Greg. Resp. ad Interrog. Augustini. q. 6.

self, the Father of the Faithful, married his brother's daughter. But when the bounds of men and believers came to be enlarged, the greater elbow-room opened a wider liberty of choice: and now God's select people found it meet to observe a due distance in the elections of their wives; so regarding the entireness of their tribes, as that they fell not within the lines of prohibition; wherein no mention being made of brother's and sister's children, in all ages and nations some have thought fit to make use of their freedom in this kind.

What need I to urge the case of Zelophehad's five daughters; Num. xxxvi. 11: who, by God's own approbation, were married to their father's brother's sons? To mince the matter, and to make these sons nephews, according to the Hebrew phrase, as Doctor Willet endeavours to do, is without either need or warrant; since these scruples were not since that time stood upon by the Jewish people.

Yea, this practice was no less current, among the civiler heathens of old. I could tell you of Cluentia, by Cicero's relation *, married to her cousin Marcus Aurius; of Marcus Antoninus, the wise and virtuous philosopher, marrying his cousin Faustina; and a world of others: were not this labour saved me by the learned lawyer Hotoman; who tells us how universal this liberty was of old, as being enacted by the laws of the Roman Empire, and descending to the laws of Justinian, and confidently affirms, that, for five hundred years, all Christian people, *magno consensu*, allowed and followed these imperial constitutions concerning matrimony †. Although I might here put him in mind of Theodosius enacting the contrary, in his time, as it is like, by St. Ambrose's instigation; who then sharply inveighed against these matches in a vehement Epistle to Paternus ‡, being then in hand with a marriage betwixt his son and his sister's daughter.

But, excepting that good emperor, the coast was clear perhaps, for the Cæsarean constitutions: not so for the judgment of Divines; amongst whom it were enough that St. Ambrose and St. Augustin, the flower of the Latin Fathers, if no other, do bitterly oppose it.

This judgment being found not probable only, but exceeding profitable to the Roman See, it is no wonder if it obtained both credit and vigour from thence. Decrees and Decretals make this inhibition good: not without damning the contrary practice: and now the Civil and Canon Laws clashing with one another, how can it be but the prevalence must be according to the power of the abettor?

What liberty the Court of Rome ‖ hath taken to itself in the restraint of marriages, and upon what ground, all Christendom both

* Cicer. Orat. pro Cluentio. † Hotoman de Grad. Cognat.—Laurent. Kirchovius Profes. Rostoch. in Consil. Matrimon. ‡ Ambr. Ep. ad Paternum. 66. ‖ *Hodie cessat fraternitas, et aliquâ ex parte compaternitas, per Concilium Trident.* Sess. 24. Navarr. c. 22. n. 27.

sees and feels. One while, their prohibition reaches to the seventh degree in natural kindred: then, to the fourth. One while the impediment of spiritual cognation is stretched so far, without any colour of divine authority, as that, what by Baptism, what by Confirmation, twenty several persons are excluded from the capacity of inter-marriage: another while, the market is fallen to fourteen. And wherefore this, but for the sweet and scarce-valuable gain of dispensations, upon these occasions flowing into the Lateran Treasure? For which considerations, we have learned not to attribute too much to the judgment or practice of the Roman Courtiers in this point.

Upon the summing up, then, of this discourse, will you be pleased to see the vast latitude of different opinions concerning these marriages? The Canon Law decries them with such rigour, as to ordain them, though after a conjugal conversation, separated. Some moderate Divines, as Doctor Willet, finding this sentence too hard, go not so far; but hold this nearness of blood a sufficient bar to hinder a marriage contracted, though not consummate: some others, as Mr. Perkins in my conference with him, hold it, though not unlawful, yet inconvenient: some others, as learned and acute Mr. Wooton, and Mr. Attersoll who hath written a very large discourse in way of vindication of them, hold them both lawful and not inexpedient: Hotoman, yet higher, *pium et Christianum esse, quòd duarum sororum liberi matrimonio copulentur;* that such a marriage is pious and Christian †.

In all this variety, if you desire my opinion, I shall neither censure such marriages, where they are made; nor yet encourage them to be made, where they are not. To those that are free, I should be apt to suggest counsels of forbearance: the world is wide; the choice abundant: let it be never so lawful, yet how unwise and unsafe were it to put the conscience upon the nicety of a dangerous scruple, when it may keep aloof off with a clear freedom and resolute contentment! That these marriages are disallowed by so great authority, should be reason enough to divert the free thoughts to a safer election: and, again, that these marriages are allowed both by civil laws, and by the judgment of eminent divines; and not any where forbidden, either *Jure Cæsareo* or *Apostolico*, by God's Law or Cæsar's; should be reason enough to bear up the hearts of those, who are so matched, from a scrupulous dejection. Let the persons, therefore, so married enjoy themselves with mutual complacency and comfort; not disquieting themselves with needless anxieties. Let those single persons, who have the world before them, look further off; and fasten their affections at a more unquestionable distance. As it was wont to be worthy Mr. Perkins's expression, to this purpose; "Let those, who must walk close to the brim of a steep precipice, look well to their feet, and tread sure; and so they may come off, perhaps, as safely as those,

* Hotoman de Vita Marrim. p. 6. citante Kirchovio; ut suprà.

that are further off: but, if a man be to chuse his way, let him so cast it, as that he may not approach near to the brink of danger."

CASE VI.

Whether is it necessary or requisite there should be a witnessed contract, or espousals of the parties to be married, before the solemnization of the marriage?

It is necessary we should distinguish, betwixt those things which are essential to the very being of marriage, and those which are requisite to the orderly and well-being of it.

It may not be denied, that the marriage is true and valid, which, with full consent of parties, is made, without the intervention of a previous contract, in a due and lawful form prescribed by the Church: but, it is no less true, that such a marriage is very unmeet, and liable to just exceptions.

That God, who is the Author and Institutor of Marriage, made a difference in his Law, betwixt a betrothing and a matrimony *: he, that ordained the one, ordained the other also; and ordained the one, in order to the other.

And this was constantly observed in the practice of God's ancient people, accordingly. So we find the Blessed Virgin espoused to Joseph, before his taking her to wife †: neither did the Christian Church think fit to vary from so holy a pattern ‡: whereto St. Paul alludes, when, writing to and of the Church of Corinth, which he had happily planted and forwarded in grace, he saith, *I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ*; 2 Cor. xi. 2. Lo, he hath betrothed them to Christ, in that he had entered them into a covenant of grace, and prepared their souls for a full consummation of their blessed union with Christ in glory; intimating, as matrimony is a lively resemblance of our spiritual conjunction with the Lord of Glory, that our bodily espousals, here below, are they, which must make way for a complete marriage ensuing.

It were not difficult, if it were needful, to deduce this holy practice down from the primitive times to the present. Before the Nicene Council, we find the Synod of Ancyra enjoining a severe penance to the man, that should defile his body by an incestuous copulation, after espousals contracted §. And the Council of Eliveris or Granado, about the time of the Nicene Convention, takes such notice of these betrothings, as that it decreed, that, if any parents should break the faith mutually engaged in these espousals, they should be held off during the space of three years from the com-

* Exod. xxii. 16. Lev. xix. 20. Deut. xx. 7. xxii. 25, 23, 28. Jer. ii. 2.
† Compare Matt. i. 18. with Deut. xxii. 13. ‡ Magdeburg. Cent. 2. de Conjugio. § Concil. Ancirau. Can. 24.

munion *. What should I trouble you with the Decree of Syricius, concerning these contracts †; or with the pregnant testimonies of St. Chrysostom and Ambrose to this purpose; which were but to waste time and paper upon so clear a truth?

As there was no Christian Church which did not carefully observe this sacred rite; so, above all other, the Roman hath been at least curious enough, in calling for a strict and severe account of their espousals. What voluminous discourses, what a world of nice questions, have fallen from the pens of their Canonists and Casuists, concerning this subject! Certainly, this is a point of so much use and agitation amongst them, that were it not for the quarrels arising herefrom, it is to be feared their Consistories would want work, and their Advocates employment.

But, to speak ingenuously, those of the Roman Clientele are not more careful and punctual in scanning and observing the rules and practice of their espousals, than ours here are incurious of both. How many have we heard to say, they will make no promise of themselves till they come to the church door! And of those, that do contract themselves, how weakly and insufficiently is it performed, on many hands; so as their act, if questioned, is no way obliging; nor such, as, upon the least discontent, will endure a contestation.

Now, whereas there is a double contract or espousal; the one of the future, the other of the present:—

That of the present, if it be expressed in full terms, differs nothing from marriage itself, save only in the public solemnization; which, doubtless, is a ceremony so requisite, as that, without it, a horrible confusion must needs follow both in Church and State:

That of the future, is a mutual engagement of both parties, that they will marry each other; which is most properly an espousal contract: giving both assurance to each other of a mutual consent to a matrimony that shall be; and yet, withal, some meet respiration of a more full trial and enquiry into each others' condition. For which purpose, the wisdom of the Church hath ordained, that there should be a solemn publication of that more private contract, three several sabbaths, to the whole congregation; not without the earnest charge of a discovery, of whatsoever impediment might justly hinder the intended matrimony.

The frequent, but unfit use of these espousal contracts in the Roman Church, betwixt their children in minority, allowing seven years in either party for a meet age to this purpose ‡, must needs breed both much question and inconvenience.

But, in those which are of a mature age, and therefore able to judge of what may be most expedient for themselves, this institution cannot be but singularly useful and beneficial: for, neither is it meet that so great a work, and so highly importing us as matri-

* Concil. Elv. c. 15. † Lyndwood in Syric. ‡ *Ætas legitimè contrahendi matrimonium, est, in masculis, 14 annos; in fœminis, 12: sponsalibus autem contrahendis, septem in utrisque.* Navar. c. 22. n. 28.

mony, should be rashly and suddenly undertaken; neither doth it a little conduce to our safety, that, since marriage once passed is irreversible, we may have some breathing time betwixt our promise and accomplishment, to inform ourselves thoroughly, before it be too late, what we must trust to for ever.

For, we may take notice, that, though marriage is indissoluble, yet these espousals or contracts of a future marriage are not so: many things may intervene, betwixt this engagement by promise and that full and complete solemnization, which may break off the match.

The Casuists determine of seventeen several cases, at the least, which may sort to this effect: some whereof have a proper relation to the Romish Religion; others are common to whatever contracts of this kind. I shall not grudge you the mention of them all.

An espousal-contract, therefore, may, according to their judgment, be broken off,

By the willing remission of both parties, although it had been seconded by an oath:

By the entrance of the one party, into some order of Religion:

By a contract with some other, in words of the present:

By the travel of one of the parties into remote countries, and not returning upon a lawful summons at a time prefixed by the judge:

By an affinity supervening upon the sinful copulation of one of the parties, with the near kinswoman of the other:

By the absolution of the judge, upon suit of one of the parties, repenting and pleading minority:

By lapse of the time set for the accomplishment of the marriage:

By the disease of one of the parties; being fallen into palsy, leprosy, the Neapolitan sickness, or any other contagious distemper or notable deformity:

By the fornication of one of the parties, committed since the contract:

By a vow of chastity, preceding the contract:

By some capital enmity intervening betwixt the families and persons of the contracted:

By the omission of performing the promised conditions; as when the dowry agreed upon, is retracted or held off:

By the fame of a Canonical impediment:

By susception of orders, after contract:

By the supervention of a legal kindred, inexpected:

By the harshness and asperity of disposition in either party:

And, which may comprise many other particularities, by the falling out and discovery of any such accident or event, as, if it had been sooner known, would have prevented the making of such a contract.

All these, say they, may bar a marriage after espousals: but yet so, as that the parties may not be their own arbiters, to break off their contracts, at pleasure; but must have recourse to the Judge Ecclesiastical, and submit themselves to the overruling sentence of the Church.

If you balk those, which are proper to the Romish Superstition; yet you shall find many just and allowable causes, which may, after a contract of espousal, interrupt a purposed matrimony: so as, if there were neither rule nor example of any such preceding engagement; yet, surely, it were very fit, for our own security, and our confident and comfortable entrance into that estate which we shall never put off, to observe carefully this previous betrothing of ourselves, ere we knit the knot that can never be loosed.

CASE VII.

Whether there ought to be a prohibition and forbearance of marriages and marriage duties, for some appointed times.

It is one thing, what is lawful; another thing, what is fit and expedient: as St. Paul hath taught us to distinguish. Marriage, being of God's own institution, and that in the perfection of paradise, there can be no time, wherein it may be unlawful to celebrate it; yet, there may be times, wherein it is unfit.

There is the like reason of times and places: both of them are circumstances alike.

The debt of the marriage-bed not only may, but must be paid by them, whom God hath called to that estate; yet, there are places, wherein it were barbarous and piacular to defray it. Even, besides those places, which are destined to a holy use, the Jews of old held this act done in the field or under a tree, worthy of scourging *.

Doubtless, there are times, so wholly consecrated to devotion, as that therein it would be utterly unseasonable to let our thoughts loose to the most lawful pleasures. Hence, is that charge of the Apostle, *Defraud not one the other, except it be with consent for the time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer;* 1 Cor. vii. 5. So then, as Solomon himself can say, *There is a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;* Eccl. iii. 5.

But what the limitation of this time may be, no small question hath been raised in the Church of God. Neither do there want extremities on both sides.

The Church of Rome hath, heretofore, been excessively large in her prohibitions; forbidding the solemnization of marriage, upon pretence of the holiness of the great feasts to be observed, for the whole third part of the year: neither doth the account fall less, if we reckon from the Advent to the Epiphany; from Septuagesima Sunday to the Octaves of Easter; and from three days before the Ascension to the Octaves of Pentecost: all which had wont to be strictly kept; besides the feast of St. John Baptist added by some, and the four Ember Weeks by others: But now, of late, upon second thoughts, their Council of Trent † have found it meet to shorten the restraint, and somewhat to enlarge the liberty of the

* Maimon. Shicard. de Reg. † Concil. Trid. Sess. 24.

seasons for marriage; having exempted the two only solemn feasts of Easter and the Nativity, and abridged some previous weeks of the former. And, for us, how observant the Consistories had wont to be of those inhibitions, for their own gain, every almanack can witness. Some worthy Divines in our Church did not stick to profess their great dislike of our conforming herein to the Church of Rome, to the scandal of the Reformed. Concerning both which I must say, that if either we or they do put any holiness in the time exempted, or any unholiness in the act inhibited, we cannot be excused from superstition. Can any time be more holy, than God's own day? yet, on that day, we do commonly both publish marriages and celebrate them. But, if, as in solemn fasts, indicted by the Church for some public humiliation, we both do and enjoin to abstain from all conjugal society; so, in a desire the more devoutly to celebrate the memory of God's infinite mercy to mankind in sending a Saviour into the world for our redemption, and of the glorious resurrection of that Son of God for our justification, we shall take off ourselves from all worldly cares or delights, I see not why it should not be both lawful and commendable.

But, to say as it is, as the Romanists are guilty of too much scruple in this kind; so too many of our own are no less faulty, in a careless disregard of the holiest occasions of restraint: which I would to God it did not too palpably appear, in the scandalous carnality of many, otherwise inoffensive, professors.

It is a common practice, which I have long wished an opportunity to censure, that husbands and wives forget one another too soon. Scarce are their consorts fully cold, ere they are laying for a second match; and too few months are enough for the consummation of it. Let me be bold to say, this haste hath in it too much, not immodesty only, but inhumanity.

If we look abroad into the world, we shall find, not among God's peculiar people only, but even amongst the very heathens, a meet, and not niggardly, intermission, betwixt the decease of the one husband or wife, and the marriage of another. A whole year was found little enough for the wife to mourn for her husband departed: and so is still amongst the very Chineses, though atheous pagans. And, by the Civil Laws, a woman, marrying within a year after her husband's death, is counted infamous *.

It was no short time †, that Abraham, though now very old, breathed upon Sarah, the first of wives mentioned as mourned for, before he took Keturah; and yet the Hebrew Doctors observe that there is a short letter ‡ in the midst of that word, which signifies his mourning; to imply, say they, that his mourning was but moderate. I am sure his son Isaac (Gen. xxiv. 67.) was not comforted concerning the death of that his good mother, till three years after her decease: at which time, he brought his Rebekah into that tent, which even still retained the name of Sarah's. Whereas, with us,

* Alex. ab Alex. l. iii. Gen. Dier. c. 7. Cod. l. ii. tit. 12. † As appears by comparing of Gen. xxiii. 2. with xxv. 1. ‡ לִבְכֹתָהּ Gen. xxiii. 2.

after the profession of the greatest dearness, the old posy of the death's ring tells what we may trust to; "Dead and forgotten." Who can but blush, to read that some heathens were fain to make laws, that the wife might not be allowed to continue her solemn mourning for her husband above ten months; and to see, that our women had need of a law, to enforce them so to mourn for the space of one?

In other Reformed Churches, there is a determinate time of months set, until the expiration whereof widows, especially the younger, are not suffered to marry. It were more than requisite, that these loose times were, here with us, curbed with so seasonable a constitution: but, it were yet more happy, if a due regard of public honesty and Christian modesty could set bounds to our inordinate desires; and so moderate our affections, that the world may see we are led by a better guide than appetite.

CASE VIII.

Whether it be necessary, that marriages should be celebrated by a Minister; and whether they may be valid and lawful without him.

It is no marvel, if the Church of Rome, which holds matrimony a Sacrament, conferring grace by the very work wrought, require an absolute necessity of the priest's hand in so holy an act: but, for us, who, though reverently esteeming that sacred institution, yet set it in a key lower, it admits of too much question, whether we need to stand upon the terms of a minister's agency in the performance of that solemn action.

There are those, in these wild times, that have held it sufficiently lawful, for the parties, having agreed upon the bargain before friends and witnesses, to betake themselves to bed: others have thought this act of conjoining the married persons in wedlock, a fitter act for the magistrate to undertake.

And, certainly, if there were nothing in marriage but mere nature, it could not be amiss, that men and women should, upon their mutual agreement, couple themselves together, after the manner of brute creatures: and, if there were nothing in marriage but mere civility, the magistrate might be meet to be employed in this service. But, now that we Christians know matrimony to be a holy institution of God himself; which he not only ordained, but actually celebrated betwixt the first innocent pair; and which, being for the propagation of a holy seed, requires a special benediction; how can we, in reason, think any man meet for this office, but the man of God, set over us in the Lord, to derive the blessings of heaven upon our heads?

From hence, therefore, have our wholesome laws taken a just hint, to appropriate this service to a lawful minister only: so as, whatever private contract may be transacted in covert between the

parties affected to each other, yet the marriage knot cannot be publicly knit by any other hand than God's ministers.

And herein, certainly, we have just cause to bless the wisdom both of the Church and State; which hath so regulated these matrimonial affairs, as that they are not only orderly, but safely managed: for, doubtless, were not this provision carefully made, the world would be quite overrun with beastliness and horrible confusion.

And, in this point, we may well give the Church of Rome her due; and acknowledge the wise care of her Lateran and Tridentine Councils, which have enacted so strict decrees against clandestine marriages, and have taken so severe a course for the reforming of many foul disorders in these matrimonial proceedings, as may be of good use for the Christian world. Had they done the like in other cases, their light had not gone out in a snuff.

As, therefore, it is generally both decreed and observed, not without excellent reason, in all Christian Churches, that marriages should be solemnized in the public congregation of God's people; so it cannot but be requisite, that it should be done by him, who is ordained to be the mouth of the congregation to God, and the mouth of God to the congregation. And, as under the Law, the priest was the man, who must convey blessings from God to his people; so, under the Gospel, who can be so apt for this divine office, as he, that serves at the evangelical altar? And, if all our marriages must be, according to the Apostle's charge, made *in the Lord*, who is so meet to pronounce God's ratification of our marriages, as he, who is the professed herald of the Almighty?

As it is therefore requisite, even according to the Roman Constitutions, that he, who is betrusted with the cure of our souls, should, besides other witnesses, be both present and active in and at our domestic contracts of matrimony; so, by the laws both of our Church and Kingdom, it is necessary he should have his hand in the public celebration of them.

There may, then, be firm contracts; there cannot be lawful marriages, without God's ministers.

CASE IX.

Whether there be any necessity or use of thrice publishing the contract of marriage in the congregation, before the celebration of it; and whether it be fit, that any dispensation should be granted for the forbearance of it.

THERE were, amongst the Jews, certain ceremonial observations, besides the precepts, which they called the Hedge of the Law; and such there cannot want amongst Christians; whose prudence must direct them, both to the ordaining and keeping of some such expedient rules, as may best preserve God's laws from violation.

Of that kind is this, which we now have in hand.

This public and reiterated denunciation of Banns before matrimony, is an institution required and kept, both by all the Churches of the Roman Correspondence *, and by all the Reformed.

Amongst which, as ours, is most eminent, so it hath still expressed the most zeal and care of the due observing of so wholesome a rite. Six several Canons † were made in our Provincial Synod, under the authority of King James, of blessed memory, in the year 1603, to this purpose; with as strict charges, restrictions, and cautions, as the wit of man could in this case devise. And the late Directory hath found cause to second so useful and laudable a constitution.

For the convenience, if not necessity whereof, we need no other argument, than the grievous mischiefs, that have followed upon the neglect of this ordinance. That one were enough, which is instanced by the Tridentine Synod itself ‡; that some lewd persons, having secretly married themselves to one, take liberty to leave that match, and publicly join themselves to another, with whom they live wickedly in a perpetual adultery; the frequent practice whereof in those hotter climates we may easily believe, when we see, that, in our own more temperate region, the fear of hanging cannot hold some off from so foul a sin.

Let me add hereunto the late experiments of some odiously incestuous marriages, which, even by the relation of our diurnalists, have, by this means, found a damnable passage, to the great dishonour of God and shame of the Church. And hereupon the sad issue of stolen marriages, wherein parents have been most feloniously robbed of their children, are too feelingly known, and irrecoverably lamented. But, as for unfitness and inequality of matches, both for age and condition, to the too late repentance and utter undoing of both parties, they are so ordinary, that they are every day's occurrences.

And all these evils have sensibly grown, from the want of these public denunciations of Banns; partly upon the unhappy throwing open of the fence of discipline, and partly upon the surreption of secretly misgotten dispensations.

And, though that forementioned Synod of ours, seconded by royal authority, took the most probable course that could be conceived §, the liberty of those faculties being continued, for the preventing of these abuses; as the restraint of the grant of them by any other, save those who have episcopal authority; and security to be given upon good bonds, that the coast is clear from all pre-contracts, suits of law, and prohibited degrees; that the full consent of parents or guardians is had; that the marriage shall be celebrated in the parish church, where one of the parties dwelleth; and, lastly, the oaths required of two sufficient witnesses, one whereof known

* Concil. Trident. Sess. 24. Decret. de Reformat. Matrimon. † Constit. 62, 63, 101, 102, 103, 104. ‡ Concil. Trid. ubi supra. § Constit. and Canons, ut supra. Can. 101, 102, 103.

to the judge, that the express consent of parents or guardians goes along with the match intended, and that there is no impediment from any pre-contract, kindred or alliance: yet, notwithstanding all this prudent caution, we have, by woeful experience, found our offices cheated, faculties corruptly procured, and matches illegally struck up, contrary to the pretended conditions; whereas all this mischief might have been avoided, if, as no marriage may be allowed but public, so those public marriages might not be celebrated, but after thrice publication of the contract in both the parish churches where the persons contracted are known to inhabit: for so, both the parents of either side cannot but be acquainted with the engagements of their children; and, if there be any just hindrance, either by pre-contract or by proximity of blood or affinity, it cannot be concealed; that so the snare of either an unlawful or prejudicial matrimony may be seasonably eschewed.

To this good purpose, therefore, it is no less than necessary, as I humbly conceive, to be both enacted and observed, that no marriage should be allowed of any person whatsoever, except perhaps the peers of the realm who are supposed to be famously known through the kingdom, without a solemn publication of their contracts at three several meetings to the congregation assembled; and that there may no dispensation at all be granted to the contrary, upon any whatsoever conditions. And, if some pretend bashfulness; others, fear of malicious prevention, as the Tridentine Doctors suggest: yet, it is fit, that both should vail, in the inevitable danger of those mischievous inconveniences, which follow upon these clandestine matches and silent dispensations.

CASE X.

Whether marriages, once made, may be annulled and utterly voided; and, in what cases this may be done.

In what only case a divorce may be made, after a lawful marriage, you have seen before: now you enquire of the annulling or voiding of marriages, made unlawfully; which, doubtless, may be done, by just authority, upon divers well grounded occasions: for, as it is an indispensable charge, *Those, whom God hath joined together, let no man put asunder;* so it no less truly holds, on the contrary, "Those, whom God hath forbidden to be joined, let no man keep together."

Our Casuists are wont to be very copious in this subject: distinguishing betwixt those impediments, which may hinder a marriage from being made; and those, which may undo and void the marriage once made.

They insist upon many particularities of both kinds; and some, perhaps, too many.

I shall instance only in those of the latter sort, which are unquestionable.

Whereof the first shall be, a misprision of the match; when one party is mistaken for another: as, when he, who, by a full contract, consented to marry with Anne, is, by a fraudulent substitution, put upon a marriage with Mary; whether upon the likeness of the woman, or the want of a discerning sense in the man, or by some cunning conveyance of the perfidious contrivers: for, certainly, it is the consent, that makes the marriage; and, if the hearts be not joined together by mutual agreement and affection, the coupling of the hands is but a ceremony utterly ineffectual. I doubt not, but it was in Jacob's power to have disavowed the match with Leah, whom his father-in-law had deceitfully obtruded upon him; being more injurious in changing his wife, than in ten times changing his wages; since his heart was not accessary to that match, which the darkness of the night and subtlety of Laban had drawn him into. The like case is in the marrying of a bondwoman, instead of a free; a base plebeian, instead of a person of honour. As, then, we use to say, that mis-reckoning is no payment; so we may well affirm, that a mis-carriage is no true wedlock, and therefore justly to be branded with a nullity.

A second may be, the foedity and unnaturalness of the match; when the parties incestuously marry within the first collateral degree of brothers and sisters: the very mention whereof, even nature itself, not depraved, abhors: so as I cannot but wonder, that the Roman School should be so much divided in this point, while Bonaventure *, Richardus, and Durand hold such a marriage, even by divine law, a nullity; contrarily, Aquinas, Cajetan, Thomas de Argentina, and others, whom Covarruvias recites, defend this to be only an impediment by the canon law, and therefore that it may be in the Pope's power to dispense with so foul a matrimony: against whom, upon better reason, Scotus † and Dominicus à Soto ‡ prove such marriages, by the law of nature, to be utterly void and null; with whom all ingenuous Christians cannot but willingly concur in their judgments.

A third may be, the horribleness of a crime committed in the way to a wicked match: and that, of two sorts; the one of murder, the other of adultery: the former, when the wife hath conspired with the adulterer to murder her husband with an intent to marry the murderer, or in the like case the husband to murder the wife; the latter, when a man, living in a known adultery with another man's wife, contracts matrimony with the adulteress in the lifetime of her husband.

A fourth is, the indissoluble knot of marriage with a former still-surviving husband or wife; the force whereof is such, as that it frustrates and voideth any supervening matrimony, except in the case specified in the foregoing discourse of divorce, during the natural life of the consorts. Many unhappy and perplexed cases have we

* Martin. Alphons. Vivald. Candelab. Aureum de Matrim. et partic. de Consanguin.

† Scot. m. 4. d. 40. ‡ Sot. ibid. q. un. art. 4.

met withal, in this kind: neither doth it seldom fall out, that the husband, being confidently reported for dead in the wars or in travel abroad, the wife, after some years' stay and diligent inquisition, finding the rumour strongly verified by credible testimonies and tendered oaths, begins to listen to some earnest suitor, and bestows herself in a second marriage; not long after which, her only true revived husband returns, and challengeth his right in that his lawful wife; pretending the miscarriage of letters and messages, sent by him in that forced absence. In this case, what is to be done? The woman hath cast herself upon the danger of a capital law, except she have expected the time limited by statute; or, if she escape, one of the husbands is to seek for a wife, whom both may not enjoy. Doubtless, the second marriage is, by ecclesiastical authority, to be pronounced, as it is, null; which, indeed, never had any true right to be: and the first must be content to swallow its own inconveniences.

A fifth may be, a violent enforcement of the match; when a woman is, upon fear of pain or death, compelled to yield herself in marriage; and is not persuaded, but affrighted into the bonds of wedlock: surely, this is rather a rape, than a matrimony; and, therefore, upon utter want of consent, a nullity.

A sixth may be, a preceding, irremediable impotency, or incapacity of marriage duties; whether natural, or adventitious; whether by way of perpetual maleficiation, or casualty. I say, preceding: for, if any such disability be subsequent to the marriage, the nullity is avoided: but, if the persons find in themselves, beforehand, such remediless incapability of a marriage estate, they shall be highly injurious to each other, and shall foully abuse the ordinance of God, in their entering into such a condition: for it is apparent, that the main ends of marriage are herein utterly frustrate; which were, by God's appointment, the propagation of mankind, and the remedy of incontinency; neither of which being attainable in such a defective estate of body, justly is such a match pronounced a nullity.

But, here, I cannot but take occasion, to commend the modesty of the women of our nation; amongst whom, there are so rare examples of suits, in this kind, prosecuted in our Ecclesiastical Consistories. It is not to be doubted, but there are many defects of this nature to be found every where; yet scarce one in an age offers to complain, and call for redress; so as it seems they are willing to smother all secret deficiencies in a bashful silence: whereas those of other warmer regions, impatient of the wrongs of their conjugal disappointments, fly out into open contestations; and fearlessly seek for those remedies, which the laws, provided in such cases, will allow them. Certainly, the merit of this modest temper is so much the greater, by how much more it is concealed from the world: and those of either sex, that are content to bite in their hidden grievances of this kind, are worthy of double honour from those consorts; whose injurious infirmities they both have not disclosed, and suffer in suppressing.

ADDITIONALS.

CERTAIN CASES OF DOUBT, BESIDES THE FORMERLY PUBLISHED, HAVING BEEN PROPOSED TO ME, AND RECEIVED A PRIVATE SOLUTION; I HAVE THOUGHT FIT, UPON THE ADDRESS OF A SECOND EDITION, TO ADJOIN THEM TO THEIR FELLOWS, FOR THE SATISFACTION OF ANY OTHERS, WHOM THE SAME CASES MAY CONCERN.

CASE I.

Whether a marriage, consummate betwixt the uncle and niece, be so utterly unlaweful, as to merit a sentence of present separation.

Resolution.

WHAT prodigious matches have been of late made, and are still continued, upon advantage taken of the unsettledness of the times, I would rather silently lament, than openly proclaim to the world. Such as are not capable of any apology, call for our blushing and tears.

But there are some others, which dare stand upon the terms of defence: such is this, which you have here propounded in the behalf of your friend, whom it seems a mis-learned Advocate would fain bear up in a course altogether unjustifiable. That cause must needs be desperately ill, that can find no mercenary abettors. His offensive marriage with his niece is heartened by a sophistical pleader; whose wit and skill is so ill bestowed in this case, that I wish his fee might be perpetual silence: but, when he hath made use of his best art to so bad a purpose, those colours of defence, wherewith he thinks to daub over so foul a cause, will prove but water-colours, which shall easily be washed off by this present confutation.

"It was lawful," he saith, "before the Levitical Law, thus to match:"—So were worse marriages than this. Let him tell me, that Cain, and Enoch, and Seth married their own sisters; as Saturn also did, by the report of Diodorus Siculus. Necessity made it then not unlawful. It is a just rule of law: "Those things may not be drawn into precedent, which have been yielded upon mere

necessity *:" as we use to say, "Necessity hath no law," so it can make none. Afterwards, as mankind grew, nature itself taught men to keep farther aloof from their own flesh: and still, remoteness of distance enlarged itself with time.

"Abraham," saith he, "married his niece Sarai; Gen. xi. 29. (if at least Sarai were Iscah); Nahor, his niece Milcah; Amram, his aunt Jochebed: and these, not without a large blessing upon the bed:"—Let him tell me also, that Jacob married two sisters, and conversed conjugally with both, which were now shamefully incestuous; yet was herein blessed with the issue of six of those Patriarchs, who were the root of those glorious stems of Israel. If we should speak most favourably of these conjunctions, to rank them under *malum quia prohibitum*; it must needs follow, that, till the prohibition came, they could not be censured as evil: though good authors make it justly questionable, whether these fore-alleged marriages should deservedly be charged with a sin, or excused by God's extraordinary dispensation. In the mean time, the blessing was to the person; not to the act. Even Lot's incestuous copulation with his daughters sped well: two famous nations sprang thence; and, of one of them, the gracious progenitrix of the Saviour of the world: yet this is no plea for the allowance of that monstrous conjunction. After the Law, one justifiable example were worth a thousand before it.

"Lo, good Caleb," saith he, "married his daughter Achsah to his brother Othniel; Josh. xv. 16, 17:"—Indeed, this case comes as home to the business, as it is far off from the text. See whither misprision of Scripture may mislead us. A man, that understands nothing but the English or Vulgate Latin, may easily run into so foul an error. Weigh but the place well, and you will soon find the fault, without me. Othniel, the son of Kenaz, Caleb's brother, took Kerath-Sepher; and Caleb gave him Achsah, his daughter, to wife. The English, wanting cases, expresses it doubtfully. It will be clear in the Latin; as Montanus and Pagnine, two great masters of the Hebrew, in their interlinear, read it, *Othniel, filius Kenaz, fratris Calebi*; "Othniel, the son of Kenaz, which Kenaz was Caleb's brother." Both the Hebrew and Chaldee clear that sense. So the Septuagint, as Emanuel Sa also urges upon that place; Judges i. 13. expressly say, that Kenaz was the brother of Caleb, and not Othniel. Wherein yet I cannot much blame an unbalanced judgment, while I find the Septuagint contrary to themselves: for, in Josh. xv. 16. they say Othniel was Caleb's younger brother; in Judges iii. 9. they say, Kenaz the father of Othniel was so; for which there is no excuse, but the large sense of a brother in the Hebrew. *We are brethren*, saith Abraham to Lot; yet he was Lot's uncle: so was Kenaz a progenitor to Othniel; for Caleb is styled the son of Jephunneh, the Kenezite; Josh. xiv. 14. and Num. xxxii. 12. The case was only this, Kenaz was the ancestor of Caleb; and one of the same name was his brother, the father of

* *In argumentum trahi nequeunt, quæ propter necessitatem sunt concessa.*

Othniel. What can be more plain, than 1 Chr. iv. 13. *And the sons of Kenaz, Othniel and Seraiah.* So as, if we take this most strictly to the letter, it implies nothing but the marriage of two cousins-german; Othniel the son of Kenaz, and Achsah the daughter of Caleb, brother's children, as Bucer upon the place, Melancthon in his tract *De Conjugio*, Junius; and, indeed, who otherwise? And now, by this time, you see what a poor ground this is to build upon: rather, you see a castle, not built on the sand, but in the air; mere misconceit.

"But," saith the Advocate, "this marriage is no where directly forbidden in the Law:"—I must tell him it is but a mere shuffle, to stand upon the terms of a direct prohibition, when there is one no less forcible and convictive. Two ways may aught be effectually forbidden in the Law; either in plain expression of terms, or in clear implication of sense: surely, that is rather more in the Law, which it means irrefragably, than what it verbally expresseth.

Now, however this be not in the letter of the Law, yet in the sense it is: the same law, that forbids the nephew to marry the aunt, doth, *eâdem operâ*, forbid the uncle to marry the niece. In regard, as of nearness, yea identity of blood, the case is the same; however some inequality may be conceived, in respect of government and subjection. And if, upon some economical terms, it be more unfit for a nephew to marry his aunt, than for an uncle to marry his niece; yet, in regard of blood, and that bodily conjunction which God principally aims at in this prohibition, what difference can possibly be conceived? Nature hath made no other distance betwixt the nephew and the aunt, than betwixt the niece and the uncle; or, if there be any, they must be sharper eyes than mine, that can discern it.

God himself, methinks, hath put this out of doubt: the reason wherewith he backs his command is irresistible: the nephew shall not marry the father's sister; why so? *For she is thy father's near kinswoman;* Lev. xviii. 12. Lo, it is the nearness of blood, that makes this match unlawful; not respect of civil inequality. Where the blood, then, is equally near, the marriage must be equally unlawful.

That Rule of law, which is pretended, *In prohibitoriis, quicquid non prohibetur, permittitur;* "What is not forbidden, is permitted;" had need of a fair construction. Indeed, that, which is not forbidden either in words or in necessary analogy and implication of sense, is supposed to be left at large. But what place hath this axiom, in a case not less really forbidden, than the expressed? And, if we should strictly follow the letter of this maxim, it would lead us into Sodom: since there are marriages not specified, which would be monstrously incestuous, and such as honesty would blush to mention; as shall appear in the sequel.

Neither is there any more force in that other, *In pœnalibus, non fit extensio;* "That penal laws should not be stretched further than their words import." Certainly, in some sense, I know no law that is not penal; but why this law, *Thou shalt not marry thy aunt*

or niece should be rather penal, than *Thou shalt not commit adultery*, I know not. I am sure learned Zanchius accounts these of the eighteenth of Leviticus, equally moral: and Bucanus holds them to be against the law of nature. And if, in human laws, this axiom may challenge a place; yet, in the royal laws of our Maker, where, under one sin mentioned, all the species and appendances, and the whole chain of that wickedness is wont to be comprised, doubtless it is utterly insufferable. Neither is here any extension of this prohibition, beyond those limits, which God hath fixed in the undoubted sense of his Law. In the seventh commandment, nothing is expressed but Adultery: shall we therefore say neither Fornication, nor Pollution, nor Sodomy is there forbidden? were not this to destroy that law, which God makes to be spiritual; and to open the floodgates to a torrent of licentiousness? Surely, it is easy to observe, that God's Spirit no less means that, which he pleaseth to suppress. The Psalmist says, *Promotion comes neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south;* Ps. lxxv. 6: shall we therefore say, "It is from the north?" is not that coast equally excluded, though not expressed? It is too much boldness, to hold God too strictly to syllables, when it is easy to determine what he meant to imply.

These rules then are useless.

Let me see now, if the Advocate can as easily shake off one or two rules of law, which I shall return upon him, in lieu of his. *Is committet in legem, &c:* "He wrongs the law, who, keeping close to the letter, strives against the intent and purpose of the law." And that other, not unlike, *In fraudem legis facit, qui, salvis verbis legis, sententiam ejus circumvenit:* if this be not the case in hand, I shall profess to know nothing.

From rules, let us look to Authorities.

"It is directly maintained," he saith, "by the Canonists and Schoolmen:"—but what is it, that is so maintained? Not this match: let no man think so: but that proposition, viz. That this match is no where directly forbidden in God's Law. If we take it of express terms, no wise man ever denied it: not Canonists and Schoolmen only, or those few named authors, but all reasonable men concur in this truth: what needs a citation of some, where all agree? But, if we take it of the necessary and clear sense of the Law by just analogy and infallible implication, now, none of the forecited, or any other orthodox authors, will deny the certain and indubitable prohibition of this marriage. How well the rest will speed, judge by their fireman, Tho. Aquinas, who expressly determines it a false position, That those are joined together by God, who match within the fourth degree; whereas, this is in the third. Not to say how stiffly Peter Lombard urges the unlawfulness of marriages, to the very seventh degree, *vel quousque parentela possit agnosci*, "even as far as the kindred may be discerned;" following herein Pope Gregory, and Nicholas. To shut up short, none of all his cited authors dare be any other than professed enemies to this match; no less than the most zealous commissioner of

that now abolished court, whose late sentence is upon record, enough to this purpose. As for Lyra, who is trailed in here, and cited strongly in Othniel's case, what shall I say? it grieves my soul, to see any well-minded Christian so abused by misinformation: this author hath thus: *Turpitudinem sororis, &c.*: "Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy father's sister, or thy mother's sister; *et eodem modo*, and in the same manner is forbidden the marriage betwixt the brother, and the daughter of the aunt, for it is the same degree:" so Lyra: nothing can be more peremptory against this case, in favour of which he is alleged.

This would be the issue of all the rest, if it were worth the while to examine them, in that, which yielded, nothing advanceth the cause of the producer. They are all as professed enemies to this match, as myself: only they deny an express mention of this cause; which was never either thought needful, or intended to be pleaded.

For the Protestant Divines, which are cited to give testimony to the non-prohibition of this marriage, I must cry shame upon those false hands, which have so palpably abused both your friend and the author's. Let me give but a taste of some, Melancthon, Zanchius, Bucanus, who are said to allow the match, by admitting only the degrees mentioned to be prohibited. No place is instanced: *versatur in generalibus.* You know the word, but let your eyes be judges of their opinion. Melancthon, mentioning the marriage of Abraham and Sarah, in the second degree, *Hoc gradu*, saith he, *in lineâ inæquali, &c.* "In this degree, in an unequal line, marriages are forbidden by God's Law, because God doth universally ordain a greater reverence to be yielded to a superior degree, than to an equal." It is the very case in hand, which Melancthon thus sentenceth. For Zanchius, he, citing the text of Lev. xviii. 13: *Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy mother's sister;* adds, *Ergo neque materteram, &c.* "Therefore no man," saith he, "may marry his aunt; and that charge, which he gives concerning the aunt, would God have to be understood also of the uncle, which is the father's brother, or the mother's brother; while he adds a reason of the prohibition, *for she is the near kinswoman of thy father or mother.*" Thus Zanchius, in his book *De Operibus Dei. lib.* iv. *de Sponsalibus*, who absolutely condemns this marriage, as incestuous and indispensable. Bucanus, moving the case of Abraham's marriage with Sarah, and Amram's with Jochebed, &c. leaves it in doubt, whether these men were, as the times stood, particularly dispensed with by God; or, whether they sinned in thus marrying, even before the Law, against the law of nature, by which he holds these matches utterly prohibited.

With what forehead then could any scholar obtrude these false allegations upon an honest client, whether to draw his foot into a snare, or to keep it there, under pretence of favouring what they professedly oppose?

As for the modern Jews, to whom he stretches out his hand for succour, it matters little what they now teach or do. They are not

more without God, than without honesty or credit. Their opinions are fabulous: their judgment frivolous: and their practice not worth our knowledge or regard.

I rather descend to the Resolution of our own Church. That our ever honoured mother hath passed her condemnatory sentence upon this marriage, in her ratification of that orthodox and just table of forbidden degrees, set forth by authority under Archbishop Parker, what doubt we now? Do we acknowledge the oracular voice of our dear and holy mother, the Church of England, and yet question whether we should obey it? Certainly, in a case of conscience, a dutiful son, methinks, should rather hold fit to follow the sacred determination of the Church, than the municipal acts of the civil state. It is an ill office of those, that would set Church and State, Canons and Statutes together by the ears, even in these points, wherein they are perfect friends.

The Statute of 32 of Hen. VIII. c. 38. intending to mar the Romish market of gainful dispensations and injurious prohibitions, professeth to allow all marriages that are not prohibited by God's Law. Such is this in hand; prohibited, though not in the letter, yet in necessary inference and interpretation. The Canon 99, of 1603, hath thus: "No person shall marry within the degrees prohibited by the laws of God, and expressed in a table set forth by authority in the year 1563; and all marriages so made and contracted shall be adjudged incestuous and unlawful." What scruple can arise hence? here is a perfect harmony betwixt Statute and Canon. It is a mere cavil, no better, to take "and" for "or;" as if the meaning were, that all degrees, whether prohibited by the Law of God or expressed in that table, are forbidden. This is a foul strain, both to grammar, and to the sense and scope of the Canon; which plainly intends to aver, that all those degrees prohibited in that table are also forbidden by the laws of God: a truth so certain, that if either self love, or love of gain did not betray the eye, it is a wonder how it should abide a contradiction. It is observable, that neither Statute nor Canon speaks of an express prohibition in God's Law: and the Canon purposely distinguisheth the terms prohibited by God's Law, and expressed in the table; as justly supposing there may be as strong a prohibition in a sense implied, as verbally expressed: else, if our laws, as is pretended, should give allowance, which God forbid, to any marriages not expressly, *in terminis*, forbidden, we should have strange and uncouth mixtures.

God, by Moses, expressly forbade the uncovering of the nakedness of father and mother: he expressed not the nakedness of son and daughter. He expressly names the nakedness of the father's wife: he expresseth not the nakedness of the mother's husband. He expressly names *the nakedness of thy sister*: he expresseth not *the nakedness of thy brother*. He expresseth *the nakedness of thy son's daughter*: he expresseth not *the nakedness of thy daughter's son*. He expresseth *the nakedness of thy father's wife's daughter*: he expresseth not the mother's husband's son. He expresseth the father's sister; not the mother's brother. He expresses the daugh-

ter-in-law; not the son-in-law. So as, by this rule, if it should be carried only by mere verbal expressions, a woman might marry her son-in-law; the nephew might marry his great-aunt; the niece, her great-uncle; the daughter might marry her mother's husband's son; the grandmother might marry her daughter's son; the daughter might marry with her mother's husband. Were these things to be allowed, the world would be all Sodom. These things, therefore, are, of necessity, included in the law, by a clear analogy; no less than if they had been expressed. "But have there been," as he saith, "precedents of this match?" I am sorry to hear it. Surely, the more, the worse; and the more need to redress it. The addition of this, if neglected, would help to strengthen an ill claim.

"Cousins-german," he saith, "have been allowed to marry:"—What is that to the present case? The difference is as much, as betwixt a nephew and an uncle. The uncle hath too much of the parent's, both right and blood, to challenge an equal claim with a cousin.

In the shutting up, it pities me to see your worthy friend driven to this plea; and, like a drowning man, to snatch at so small a twig. "Being done," he saith, "it ought not to be undone:"—Alas! the Canon is peremptory. It is incestuous and unlawful. What plea is there for continuance? Speak not, therefore, of either connivance or dispensation. This match is only capable of a late, but much-wished repentance, on the offender's part; and a just diremption, on the part of the judges.

CASE II.

Whether it be lawful, for a man to marry his wife's brother's widow.

Amongst all the heads of Case-Divinity, there is no one, that yieldeth more scruples, than this of marriage; whether we regard the qualification of the persons, or the emergency of actions and events.

It is the lawfulness of this match, that you enquire after; not the expedience: and I must shape my answer accordingly.

It hath been the wisdom and care of our godly and prudent predecessors, to ordain a table of all the prohibited degrees to be publicly hanged up in all the several churches of this nation; to which all comers might have recourse for satisfaction. This catalogue you have perused, and find no exception of the case specified. I know no reason, therefore, why you may not conclude it not unlawful.

The question of the expedience would require another debate. Doubtless, in all cases of this nature, it must needs be yielded, that it were more meet and safe, since the world yields so large a latitude of choice, to look further off. A wise and good man will not willingly trespass against the rules of just expedience: and I will be

as careful to consider what is fit to be done, as what is lawful. But that comes not, at this time, within your enquiry.

While, therefore, I give my opinion for the lawfulness of this marriage with the relict of the wife's brother, I do no whit clash, as you suggest, with the judgment of Beza and Mr. Perkins, who profess their dislike of such copulations. I shall as readily cry them down for unmeet and inconvenient, as those, that, with too much boldness, come over-near to the verge of a sinful conjunction: but, for the not-unlawfulness of this match, I did, upon the first hearing, give my affirmative answer; and, the more I consider of it, I am the more confirmed in that resolution.

That universal rule mentioned by you, as laid down by those two worthy authors, must endure a limitation; *Cujus non licet inire nuptias, ejus nec conjugis licet;* That there is the same degree and force of relation of a third person, in the case of marriage, to the husband and to the wife; so as, proximity of blood in the one, should not be a greater bar than the same proximity of alliance in the other: otherwise, many more copulations will fall under censure, than common practice will condescend unto. And that ground of, *uxor pars quædam viri*, "the wife is as a part of the husband," as it holds not in natural relation at all, so not in all conjugal; as might be too easily instanced in divers particulars.

And, if there were not some difference in these relations, those second persons, which are interested in the husband or wife, might not come near to the next in affinity to them. For example: my brother may not marry my sister: therefore, by this rule, he might not marry my wife's sister; and so it should be unlawful for two brothers to marry two sisters; than which, nothing is more ordinary, or less obnoxious to disallowance.

That general rule, therefore, must be restrained necessarily to the first rank of affinity. If we descend lower, it holds not.

For further explanation, our Civilians and Canonists are wont to make two kinds or degrees of affinity: the one, primary; the other, secondary.

In the first, is the affinity between the husband and the cousins of blood to his wife, or *è converso;* which, indeed, is justly held no less for a bar of marriage, than his own natural consanguinity; for that is an affinity contracted upon interest of blood, by virtue of that entire union between man and wife, whereby they both become one flesh.

The secondary affinity is that, wherein there is another person added moreover to that first kind now mentioned; the affinity arising only from the interest of an affinity formerly contracted, not from consanguinity: and this is not so binding, as either to hinder a marriage to be contracted; or, being contracted, to dissolve it.

In this rank, are the brother's wife, and sister's husband; and, therefore, upon the decease of the brother and sister, the husband of the sister deceased, and the wife of the deceased brother, may marry together; as Dr. Nicholaus Everhardus, out of Richardus de Media Villa and Panormitan, hath clearly determined *.

* Consil. Matrimonial. Germanor. Consil. 5.

Of this kind, is the marriage now questioned; which, therefore, doth not fall within the compass of the prohibition. *Secundum genus affinitatis, &c.*: "The second kind of affinity, which is by a person added unto the first kind, is no bar to matrimony." And with this judgment I find no reason why I should not concur: but, if any man think that he sees just ground to entertain a contrary opinion, I prejudge him not; but modestly leave him to the freedom of his own thoughts.

CASE III.

Whether an incestuous marriage, contracted in simplicity of heart, betwixt two persons ignorant of such a defilement; and so far consummate, as that children are born in that wedlock; ought to be made known and prosecuted to a dissolution.

It is a question, as it may be put, full of doubt and intricacy.

Parallel whereunto, and eminent in this kind, was that case, which I had long since from the relation of Mr. Perkins; and, since that, have met with it in the report of two several German authors.

The case thus. A gentlewoman, of great note in those parts, being left a widow, had her son trained up in her house: who, now having passed the age of his puberty, grew up, as in stature, so in wanton desires; earnestly soliciting her chambermaid to his lust. She had the grace, not only to repel his offers; but, being wearied with his wicked importunity, to complain to her mistress of his impetuous motions. The mother, out of a purpose to repress this wild humour in her son, bids the maid, in a seeming yieldance, to make appointment the night following with him; at which time, she would change beds with the maid, and school the young man to purpose. This being accordingly done, the Devil so far prevailed with the mother, that, instead of chastising, she yielded to the lust of her son; and, by him, conceived a daughter. And now, finding herself to grow big, for the hiding of her shame, she retired secretly to a remote part of the country; where she, unknown, left the burden of her womb, and took order for all care and secrecy of education. After some years, the mother thinks fit to call home her concealed issue, under the pretence of a kinswoman; and gives her such breeding in her house, as might become the child of a friend. The maid grew up to such comeliness, both of person and behaviour, that the son, now grown a man, fell into passionate love with her; and, in short, married her: little thinking, that he was now matched with his own daughter, begotten by him of his own mother. They lived lovingly and comfortably together, and had divers children betwixt them. Only the mother, who was alone conscious of this monstrous copulation, began to find a hell in her bosom: and, in a deep remorse, made the case at last known to

some learned divines of that time; who bestowed many serious thoughts upon so uncouth a business, and finally agreed upon this determination:—That, all circumstances thoroughly weighed, the penitent mother should, after a sound humiliation, secretly make her peace with God, for so foul and prodigious a sin: but, that the knowledge of the horrible incestuousness of this match should still and ever be concealed from the young couple, who thought of nothing, but a fair and honest legality in this their conjunction.

The decision of this point comes somewhat home to yours.

To spend my opinion therefore in this case, I find no reason, all things considered, to vary from their judgment.

I say then, that the mother's sin was not more heinous, in yielding to so abominable an act of incest with her son; than in smothering the seasonable notice of it, for the preventing of a worse incest with her daughter: for that first act of her incest was transient; but this incest, which was occasioned by her silence, was permanent, and derivable to her posterity. She ought, therefore, though to her perpetual shame, when she saw an inclination in her son, to so foully unnatural a match, to have forestalled it by a free confession; and to have made him sensible of so odious a procreation: which not being done, it must needs be said, that, as the first act of the son was a voluntary fornication, but an involuntary incest; so this incestuous copulation of the son with the daughter, was involuntary in them both; and there cannot be an actual sin, wherein there is not a consent of the will.

On the one side, it is shameful to think that so grievous a sin should pass without some exemplary censure; and that so foul blood should be propagated to succeeding ages, for want of the timely intervention of a vindicative authority: but, on the other side, it should be well considered, what miserable inconveniences, yea mischiefs would follow upon so late a discovery.

First, all honest hearts are put into a just, but unprofitable horror; to think that such a flagitious wickedness could be committed. Then the mother, who had rinsed her soul with a fountain of tears, for so hateful a miscarriage; and reconciled herself to that God, who was the only witness of her sin; should be so late exposed to the unseasonable shame of that world, which never was privy to her offence. As for the young couple thus prodigiously conjoined, how could they chuse, upon the too late notice of their so deplorable condition, but run mad for anguish of soul; and wear out the rest of their days, in shame and sorrow? And, for the children born to them in so detestable a wedlock, whom they had formerly beheld with complacence and comfort, as the sweet pledges of their conjugal love, how must they now needs look upon them as the living monuments of their ignominy; and loath them, as the most basely begotten imps of a worse than bestial copulation? And, when riper age should bring that unhappy offspring forth into the world, how should they be every where pointed at, and hooted after, as some strange aberrations of nature! All which are avoided by this secresy.

But if, on the other side, you shall reply, that this one evil is more than equivalent to all these; That, in the mean time, these parties live in a continual incest, and traduce it to following generations; I must put you in mind, to distinguish betwixt the state of incest, and the sin of incest. It is true, they live in a state of incest; but, from the sin of incest they are excused by an ignorance, altogether invincible: an ignorance, both of the original fact, and of their mutual relations. For, it is to be supposed, that, had they had the least intimation of the natural interest of father and daughter, they would, with much indignation, have defied so foul a commixture: which even brute creatures, if we may believe histories, have, by the instinct of nature, abominated; and, upon after-knowledge, revenged. And, if any light of knowledge had broken forth unto the parties, of that condition wherein shey stood, then to have continued under that state of incest, but an hour, had been damnably sinful: now, all those inevitable consequences of shame and horror must have been slighted and forgotten; and must have shut up, in a sudden dissolution.

But, as there are many degrees of incest; and the sin is so much more or less heinous, as the parties are nearer or more remote; I perceive the case intimated by you concerns a lower rank of incestuous copulation, namely, an incest arising from a man's carnal knowledge of a person too near in blood unto her, whom he afterwards marrieth; the fact known only by one, who now doubts whether he be not bound to reveal it.

And why not sooner, when so faulty a match might have been prevented? why so late, when the remedy intended would be as noxious as the disease? why at all, when there is no necessity or use of the revelation?

This question starts another more universal, How far we may or ought to make known the secret sin of another.

Doubtless, to prevent some enormous act, which may follow upon our silence; or, upon the urging of lawful authority, when we are called to give evidence concerning a fact questioned; or, to antevert some great danger to the public, to ourselves, to our friend; we may and must disclose our knowledge of a close wickedness; or, if the act be so heinously flagitious, and redounding to so high dishonour of God, as that our conscience tells us we shall participate of this sin in concealing it; our holy zeal shall herein bear us out in a just accusation; although, in this case, heed must be taken, that our single crimination may be so carried and made good by circumstances, that it draw us not into the peril of a slander.

But, without these, I cannot see, that the revealing of a secret sin can be construed any otherwise, than an act of detraction; than which, nothing can be more odious and prejudicial to human society.

We have learned from Aquinas, that there are eight ways of this hateful practice; whereof four are direct: the raising of a false crime, the amplifying of a true crime, the disclosing of a crime secret, and the sinister construction of another's fact.

To these I must add, that, even where the act is such as challengeth a revelation, the time may be unseasonable and past the date. You know that the notice of treason, if too long smothered, draws the concealer into danger: and, in this case, though there be no peril in the silence, yet there may be injury.

Shortly, this sin, if ever, should have been so early made known to the party concerned, as might have prevented the making up of a match secretly sinful; and have convinced the agent of a foul illegality, whereof he was ignorant: but now, thus over-late, would break out to an unprofitable vexation; since this crime, which might justly have hindered the marriage from being contracted, ought not to have the force, after so long intermission and success of an intervenient wedlock, to dissolve it. The time was, when the minister, in a solemn preconization, called you either then to speak, or for ever after to hold your peace: had you then spoken, it might have been construed as zeal; now, not to hold your peace, will be interpreted no better than malice.

AN

ADVERTISEMENT TO THE READER.

I HAVE been earnestly moved by some judicious friends, to go on with this subject; and to make up a complete Body of Case-Divinity, both Practical, Speculative, and Mixed: whereof, I confess, there is great defect in our language. But I remember the talk which Plutarch reports to have been betwixt Crassus and King Deiotarus; two old men, but great undertakers. Crassus jeers Deiotarus, for laying the foundation of a new city, in his decayed age; Deiotarus twits Crassus, for going about, in the like age, to subdue the warlike Parthians: both justly supposing our decrepit age a just dissuasive, from venturing upon great enterprises. Although, herein, I should not want a worthy precedent, that honour of Navarre, Martinus Azpilcueta; who, at ninety years, finished the fourth edition of that his elaborate Manual of Cases of Conscience. But, as for me, I am sufficiently conscious of my own inabilities for so long and difficult a work: only this, I shall willingly profess, that such scruples as I meet with in my way, I shall not allow myself to balk; and shall leave the answers upon the file. In the mean time, let me incite some of our many eminent Divines, whose wits are fresh, and bodies vigorous, to go through with so useful a work. Many years are passed, since my ancient and worthy colleague, Dr. Ralph Cudworth, told me, that he had, with much labour, finished that task, and devoted it to the press, which yet sleeps in some private hands. It were happy, if his worthy son, the just heir of his father's great abilities, would make strict enquiry after it; and procure it to the public light, for the common benefit of God's Church, both in the present and succeeding ages.*

* Plut. in Vitâ Crassi.

THE

HOLY ORDER:

OR,

FRATERNITY OF THE MOURNERS IN SION.

HUMBLY AND EARNESTLY TENDERED TO ALL GOD'S FAITHFUL ONES.

BY JOSEPH, BISHOP OF NORWICH.

TO MY WORTHY FRIEND,

MR. G. H.

SIR:

AFTER my stedfast purpose of a silent obscurity for the small remainder of my days, I do now, once more, break loose again. The view of the danger and sad condition of the Church of God hath wrung these lines from me. You know the story of Cræsus's son: right so it is with me, upon sight of the mortal peril of our common and dearer parent. For Sion's sake I will not, *(I may not, I cannot)* hold my peace; *for my own, I would and shall. If, therefore, you believe that these papers may avail ought towards the public good, let them fly abroad out of your hands; since I have resolvedly shut my own, save only for their lifting up to heaven for mercy to our Sion; wherein yourself, and all other faithful patriots of the Spiritual Jerusalem, will heartily join with,*

Your much devoted,

J. H.

THE

HOLY ORDER

OF THE

MOURNERS IN SION.

FORASMUCH as there is no well-affected Christian, that is not deeply sensible of the woeful calamity of this once-glorious Church, now humbled into the dust of confusion; and exposed to the pity of all those foreign neighbours, which heretofore blessed it as a singular pattern of divine mercy, and to the scorn and insultation of Gath and Ascalon: and, forasmuch as it is, and hath been ever the practice of the enemies of our peace, to range themselves into several ranks and files, under various forms, qualities, and denominations; as, on the one side, the society of Jesus, the Order of the Glorious Virgin, the Arch-confraternity of the Most Holy Trinity, and the rest of this kind, not easy to be numbered; on the other side, Seekers, Quakers, Shakers, Dippers, the Holy Family of Love, Ranters, and such other prodigies of misreligion and faction; and, thereby, have found advantage several ways, for the promoting of our ruin: why should it not be found requisite, that we, the professed servants of our Lord Jesus Christ, orthodox and genuine sons of the Church of England, whose hearts are moved by the good Spirit of God to a just resentment of our miseries and dangers, should firmly resolve, for the countermining of these engineers of hell and conspirers of our destruction, to enter into a safe, warrantable, Holy Fraternity of Mourners in Sion; whose profession and work shall be a peculiarity of devotion: striving, with fervent prayers and tears, to obtain from heaven a seasonable redress of these our pressing calamities; and a prevention of that utter overthrow and final devastation, which threatens this miserable Church, wherein we do yet live?

And, for this purpose, may it be thought meet to tie ourselves, by our secret and silent vows, to these Rules following:—

1. That, without all offensive, tumultuous, and suspectible complottings and conventions, we shall hold up our private devotions; and perform these our godly undertakings to that premised end.

2. That there shall be no superiority or subordination in this Holy Fraternity, nor any soul more interested in it than other: and, therefore, no formality or ceremony of admittance into it; but a free and voluntary entrance left open for all comers, into this strict course of Christian austerity; without any noise; without the required notice of any, but God and their own conscience: that the world may well see and know, that here is no other design, than merely spiritual; aiming at nothing, but religious transactions between God and our souls; and consisting in the performance of the unquestionable exercises of piety and holy devotion.

3. That we shall zealously excite our neighbours and friends to be passionately affected with this sad estate of God's Church; and to be liberal of their sighs, and tears, and prayers for the happy recovery of it.

4. That we will effectually endeavour to work our hearts to a sound humiliation for our own sins, which have helped to contribute to the common stock of our miseries; and daily renew our vows of a more strict and holy obedience, and a more close walking with our God.

5. That we shall deeply take to heart, and secretly mourn for and lament the sins of our people; representing them to our thoughts, in their heinous nature and quality; humbly begging for their serious repentance of them, and earnestly deprecating the judgments provoked by them.

6. That, for this end, we shall do our best endeavour to get just notice of the sad estate of this distracted Church of ours; and to be truly apprehensive of the peril wherein it stands: as also, of the horrible blasphemies and damnable heresies, which have been of late disgorged from the mouth of hell amongst us; and those hellish practices, which have followed thereupon, to the high dishonour of the Majesty of that Holy God, whom we pretend to serve; to the utter shaming of that blessed Gospel, which we profess: forasmuch as we cannot mourn, for what we know not; nor mourn enough, for what we do not know to be so transcendently sinful.

7. As of the sins, whereby we have moved the fierce anger and wrathful displeasure of our God against us; so also, shall we take full notice of the judgments, whereby we have smarted from his most just hand: yea, in a larger comprehension of the judgments past, present, imminent. Amongst which, how can we but sorrowfully reckon the mutual effusion of so much Christian blood, spilt by the hands of brethren; and, as the tribes of Israel did for Benjamin, bitterly mourn for the slain of our people? of whom so many, on both parts, have been swept away from the earth, in the fury of a violent hostility, as might well have served to store a populous nation; or might probably have overrun the professed enemies of Christendom. To these we cannot but add the woeful disasters and inexpressible miseries, which do always inevitably attend an intestine war. But, of all judgments, none have cause to make so deep an impression in us, as the spiritual; as knowing, that, as our God is terrible in all his inflictions, so most of all where he is least felt:

when he pays us in our own coin: when he punishes us with our sins; making one sin the revenger and executioner of another: when he repays our actual rebellion against him, with a senseless obdurateness; with a plausible security, and deadness of spirit: when he rewards our neglect and contempt of his ordinances, with giving us up to spiritual delusions, and to the seductions of the spirits of error; to prodigious whimsies, and heretical blasphemies. We shall then, as we have too just reason, lay together these evils that we feel, with those which we have no less cause to fear; and, under the sense of both, shall find our hearts pierced with sorrow, and resolved into the just tears of our mourning.

8. That we shall not fail, both by night and day, constantly to pour out our hearts, in strong cries and fervent prayer to our God, that he will be pleased, now at last, to visit this miserable and disconsolate Church, in mercy and compassion; and cause the light of his countenance to shine upon us, once again.

9. That the matter of our prayers shall be the illumination and reduction of those our weak brethren, which offend through ignorance; and, out of a well-meant zeal, are, in the simplicity of their hearts, miscarried into erroneous ways, whether of doctrine or practice: for the merciful conversion of the not-obdured and wilful opposers of the truth: for the seasonable confusion of the desperately malicious enemies of God and his Church: for the settling of the Church of God in righteousness, order, and peace: for the prevalence and happy success of the Gospel, against all schism, heresy, errors in opinion, and wickedness of life: for the discovery and defeat of all the devices and machinations of Satan, and all his accursed instruments, against the Church of Christ in all parts of the world; and, especially, in these disjointed members of it, wherein we are interested: for the encouragement and prosperity of all those, that are faithful in the land, and that are hearty well-wishers to our Sion: for the averting of those heavy and desolatory judgments, which our sins have thus long and loudly called for: and, lastly, for the making up of our deplorable breaches; and reuniting of all honest and faithful hearts, in a firm concord and Christian love.

10. That we shall, every week, set apart one day for this holy purpose; wherein we shall humble ourselves in private fasting and prayer, till it shall please our God to return to us, in his wonted compassion; and to put an end to these deadly distractions, under which we labour.

11. That we shall willingly abridge ourselves of our wonted pleasure; not giving ourselves leave to enjoy any public meetings of mirth and jollity; nor take the liberty of those lawful recreations, which we have formerly made use of, while the hand of God lies thus heavily upon this Church and Nation.

12. That it shall be the desire of our hearts, that all, which shall condescend to join together in the profession of this Holy Fraternity, be knit together in an entire affection to one another, and be ready to shew all mutual respects of Christian love and observance

to each other, upon all occasions; being, withal, in all meekness of spirit, charitably affected to, and lovingly conversing with, those their brethren and neighbours, which are not yet so sensible of the just cause of their humiliation.

13. That, in the conscience of our own wants and infirmities, we shall make it our care, to spend our main censures upon ourselves and our own enormities: not being apt to fly out upon the weaknesses and defects of our brethren: bearing with those, that are otherwise minded in matters of an inferior nature: not aggravating the blame of those their actions or opinions, which may be capable of a gentler and milder construction; and reserving the edge of our zeal for those foul and gross offences, which carry open guilt in their faces; making head against them by all spiritual resistance, and godly endeavours of reclamation.

14. That, whensoever we shall be called to deliver the message of God to his people in public auditories, we shall not fail to lay open and bewail the sins of the time: and to rouze up our hearers, with all zealous exhortations, to a lively sense of just sorrow, for the universal overflowings of wickedness; and to a vehement and godly striving against the stream thereof, by their prayers and utmost endeavours.

15. That we shall heartily labour not to be found defective, in the use of all good means, whereby the peace and welfare of God's Church may be procured and maintained; and shall carefully avoid all such ways and means, which may, in any sort, endanger the widening of the unhappy breaches, and multiplying of the many and miserable distractions thereof.

These are the Laws, to which we have thought fit, in these doleful times, to bind ourselves, in the presence of that God, who hath graciously wrought in us a feeling compassion of the public evils; beseeching him, who is the Father of all Mercies, to enable us, by the powerful operation of his Good Spirit, to an effectual performance of all these our holy engagements; that, after the short time of our mourning in this vale of tears, we may be admitted to be the blessed partakers of that eternal joy, which abides for all his in heaven.

Christian Brethren, of what quality soever, I cannot fear, lest it will seem too much boldness in me to invite you all, to take part with me in this Holy Fraternity: which you shall highly wrong, if ye shall look upon it as mine, or any merely human institution. No: the Founder of it is in heaven. It is the charge of the Holy Ghost himself, by the hand of his Chosen Vessel, *Weep with them that weep*; Rom. xii. 15. If our tears, therefore, be, as they are, most just, ye are bound to add yours to them: and shall offend, if ye forbear. Neither can ye be ignorant, that the Son of God himself, while he was visibly here upon earth, did not only own it, as well pleasing to him; but encouraged it with a promise of an assured comfort, and crowned it with no less title than blessedness; Matt. v. 4. Luke vi. 21. And, if ye look for a more ancient precedent, even before the Lord of Life was manifested in the flesh, ye

do apparently find this Fraternity of singular note in old Jerusalem: Ye know the man, clothed in white linen, which had the writer's inkhorn by his side, had this charge from the mouth of the Lord himself: *Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men, that sigh and that cry for all the abominations, that be done in the midst thereof*, Ezek. ix. 4. Lo, here, a company of Mourners marked out for mercy, even while the sanctuary is contemptuously defiled, and all Jerusalem is in blood!

Shall I now need any other motive, to win you into the Brotherhood of this Sacred Order?

Know, then, that *They, which sow in tears, shall reap in joy*: and *He, that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him*; Ps. cxxvi. 5, 6. Know, that they are not tears, but pearls, that thus fall from your eyes; dearly precious to the Almighty; and carefully reserved in his casket, for the decking of your souls to all eternity. Know, that even the Lord of Glory was *a Man of Sorrows*; and that he bedewed Jerusalem with his tears, ere he watered it with his blood. If therefore ye will be moved, either with the sweet and unfailable promises of a gracious acceptation, and a blessed remuneration of everlasting comfort; or led by the precept or the example of that Dear Saviour, whose Name ye profess to bear; refuse not, delay not, to enter yourselves into this so Holy, Ancient, and Highly-Privileged Fraternity of Mourners in Sion.

Mourn then, my Brethren, mourn heartily: but, as the Apostle in another case, *Mourn not as men without hope*. Be not disheartened, O ye faithful Mourners in Sion; as if ye were hopelessly condemned to a perpetual darkness, and were doomed to dwell under a cloud of endless sorrow. The Almighty will find a time to have mercy upon his poor Church; and to clear up his countenance towards his chosen ones: wiping all tears from their eyes, and all spots from their faces; and answering the holy desires of their hearts, in shewing them his Sion in her perfect beauty. Could we but weep soundly, he would smile upon us, and comfortably shine upon his sanctuary, and make the place of his feet glorious, even an eternal excellency, the joy of many generations.

Indeed, for the present, O our God, thou hast removed our souls far from peace; thou hast most justly filled us with thine indignation: for we have deserved that thou shouldest pour our iniquities upon us; and shouldest bring upon us the fruits of our own thoughts, and measure our works into our bosoms; and cause us to drink at thy hand the cup of thy fury, yea, even to have the dregs of the cup of trembling, to be wrung out to us: for we have walked every one after the imagination of his own evil heart. Our transgressions are with us, and are multiplied before thee: and, though we have professed to be humbled under thy mighty hand, we have not cried to thee in our hearts, when we howled upon our beds; neither have we loathed ourselves in our own sight, for the evils that we have committed: so as we do now justly lie down in

our shame, and our confusion covereth us; willingly acknowledging, that our iniquities have most deservedly turned away thy blessings from us, and drawn thy judgments upon our heads. But, O Lord, hast thou so smitten us, that there is no healing for us? Have we put ourselves utterly out of the reach of thy boundless mercies? Art not thou the God, that retainest not thine anger for ever, because thou delightest in mercy? Oh, why shouldest thou then be to us *as a mighty man that cannot save? O thou, the hope of Israel, and the Saviour thereof in time of trouble*, return, return to thy people in the tender bowels of thine infinite pity and compassion. Humble our souls thoroughly, under the sense of our many backslidings and grievous provocations of the eyes of thy glory. Oh, strike thou our heart with an unfeigned repentance of all our evil ways; and, once again, speak peace unto thy servants. Was there ever a more stiff-necked and rebellious people, O Lord, than thine Israel? more eminent in abused mercies? more notorious in all kinds of abominable wickedness? more exercised with variety of judgments? yet, when they cried to thee in their distress, thou wert still ready to hear and deliver them; and to renew thy so often-forfeited blessings upon them; and wouldest not let loose thy vengeance upon them, till there was no remedy. Behold, we are thy people, though a sinful one; a second Israel, both for sins and mercies. Now, Lord, since it is thy marvellous mercy that we are not yet consumed, be still pleased to magnify thy infinite goodness, in thy gracious forbearances, and our powerful conversion to thee. And, though we cannot but confess that we are *a sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil doers*; yet, Lord, thou knowest that thou hast thy secret ones amongst us; a people, that prayeth and trembleth at thy judgments, and waiteth humbly at the door-posts of thy sanctuary; a people, that desireth to walk close with thee their God, and to be approved of thee in all their ways; a people, that sigheth and mourneth for the abominable sins of the land of their nativity. Oh, for their sakes, be thou entreated to hold off thy revenging hand from this sinful nation; and even yet still provoke us by thy goodness to repentance. O thou, the Righteous and Merciful Judge of the World, who even for ten righteous persons wouldest have spared a Sodom and Gomorrah from their fiery execution, be pleased tenderly to regard the cries of thy many hundred faithful and devout souls, that sue to thee for the stay and removal of thy deserved judgments. *Oh, do thou look down from heaven; and behold, from the habitation of thy holiness and thy glory*, the unfeigned humiliation of thy servants, who are prostrate before thee, with fastings, and weeping, and mourning. Turn away thy heavy displeasure from us; and pity thy sanctuary, which is desolate. So shall our mouths be full of the praises of thy Name; and thy saints shall rejoice and sing new songs unto the God of our salvation.

In the mean time, we shall, in silence and hope, wait upon the Lord, that hideth his face from Jacob; and not cease to pour out ourselves in tears and supplications to him, that is mighty to save.

Neither will we suffer our cheeks to be dry, or our souls to receive comfort, till we shall receive a gracious answer from heaven; and shall see that the Lord hath been pleased to shew mercy to his Sion.

In this condition, we, that are Sion's Mourners, shall not need to be distinguished, as other Orders are wont, by colours, devices, habiliments. Our qualifications will be easily discerned, by our sad faces, wet eyes, deep sighs, mortified carriage, willing neglect of those vanities wherewith others are transported, our holy retiredness, assiduous devotions, and strict professions of godliness. Carry yourselves thus, Dear Brethren, and God and his angels shall gladly welcome you into that Holy Society of Mourners, which shall be marked out for preservation here, and for eternal comfort hereafter.

Lastly, let none of you discourage himself from entering into this Sacred Fraternity, out of the sense of his bodily infirmity, or the urgent necessity of outward impediments. There is many a holy soul, that dwells inconveniently, in a crazy, tottering, ruinous cottage, ready to drop down daily upon his head, not able to endure the subtraction of one meal's support. There are not a few well affected Christians, whom the necessary exigencies of their calling and estate, like so many hard taskmasters, hold close to their tale of bricks; not allowing them the leisure of our limited devotion. Let all these, of both kinds, know, that they have no cause hereupon, either to hold off; or to think they shall, in this case, need the dispensation of any superior power; since their condition doth sufficiently dispense with itself. Even the severest Casuists of the Roman Church, who are wont to be the rigidest exactors of the outward exercises of mortification, do, in these cases, allow of a just relaxation. My Brethren, if ye cannot fast; yet ye can pray: if your stomachs be weak; yet your zeal may be strong. Ye can mourn, though ye pine not: and, if ye cannot spare a day in seven; yet ye may spare an hour in twelve, and make up the rest in your frequent and fervent ejaculations. Shortly, if you have truly mourning souls, they will be accepted in the necessary want of the strict terms of bodily exercises.

Farewell, in the Lord.

SONGS IN THE NIGHT;

OR,

CHEERFULNESS UNDER AFFLICTION.

BY JOSEPH, BISHOP OF NORWICH.

TO MY DEAR AND WORTHILY RESPECTED FRIEND,

MR. G. H.

SIR:

I THANK you for your comfortable Letter, which came to me as a seasonable cordial after a strong potion.

It is true, I have been no niggard of my good counsel to others, in this kind; yet now could not but have need enough of it myself. So I have known experienced physicians, in their sickness, to call for their neighbour doctor's advice; and to make use of his prescript, rather than their own. Although, also, I have not been altogether negligent, in the speedy endeavour of my own cure; as you will see by this enclosed Meditation.

Indeed, it pleased my God lately, as you well know, to exercise me with a double affliction, at once; pain of body, and grief of mind for the sickness and death of my dear consort. I struggled with them both, as I might; and, by God's mercy, attained to a meek and humble submission to that just and gracious hand, and a quiet composedness of thoughts: but yet, methought, I found myself wanting, in that comfortable disposition of heart and lively elevation of spirit, which some holy souls have professed to feel in their lowest depression; fetching that inward consolation from heaven, which can more than counterpoise their heaviest crosses.

Upon this occasion, you see here how I held fit to busy my thoughts; labouring by their holy agitation, to work myself, through the blessing of the Almighty, to such a cheerful temper, as might give an obedient welcome to so smarting an affliction; and, that even while I weep, I might yet smile upon the face of my Heavenly Father, whose stripes I do so tenderly suffer.

If, in some other discourses, I have endeavoured to instruct others; in this, I mean to teach myself; and to win my heart to a willing and contented acquiescence in the good pleasure of my God, how harsh soever it seems to rebellious nature. Take this, then, as a thankful return of your consolatory discourse to me; and help him still with your fervent prayers, who is

Your faithfully devoted friend and fellow labourer,

J. H. B. N.

REVEREND SIR:

WHAT a rich gainer have you made me, in improving those poor sparks, which my dulness could strike out, into a flame! I will now wonder no more, to see the bee extract honey out of the meanest flower.

This treasure of comfortable thoughts you have been pleased to return, how can I value sufficiently? Songs in the Night, indeed! in which you shew the strong composedness of your soul, victorious, and holily insulting over whatsoever afflictions you have been assaulted with. With David's harp and such songs, what mutinous evil spirit may not be charmed and allayed? what dull spirit not elevated?

That nearest loss, which gave you the occasion of thus settling your thoughts, I now cease to condole; being more ready to gratulate to you the happy advantage you have made of it.

Let me also, in the world's behalf, acknowledge, with gratitude, the benefit it hath received from you in those your later tracts, which it owes to your secession. Whatsoever others do, you, I am sure, have brought forth more fruit in your age; and that, such as gives evidence of the ever-living vigour of your mind. Men do find, still, the same nerves and sinews, the same vivacity and fluency, as ever.

Here, give me leave, I beseech you, for I cannot forbear to take the liberty of quarrelling with you, as I have just cause, for that over hasty farewell you have taken of the world and the press. How, Sir, can you think yourself discharged as Emeritus, *notwithstanding all the great services you have done to God's Church, when they take notice of your still-continuing strength? This age of ours, which as yourself have complained hath more brain than heart, and of which Lipsius may seem to have given the truest censure,* nulla unquam ætas fertilior religionis, sterilior pietatis, *wants more quickenings of devotion; and yours especially, which flow so experimentally from you: not as some others, of whom it hath been said,* eorum oratio in ore nascitur, non in pectore.

Among other of your tracts, give me leave to say your "Select Thoughts" *do especially make good their title. In those, you have grasped and taken in the most vital notions; and, if the Christian find not his soul filled with marrow and fatness, it is because he hath not made those thoughts his own: and, though I acknowledge them very complete, and needing no addition, yet another edition of them, with your* "Breathings of the Devout Soul," *being greedily desired, suffer me thus far to offer violence to your fixed purpose of appearing no more in the press, as to presume upon your not angry reluctance to a publishing of this your comfortable Meditation, by which you may lift up many droop-*

ing spirits, that are ready to sink under their pressures in these evil times. Let this at least persuade you, it is in some danger to be ravished from me; and may perhaps steal abroad in a worse dress, or not in such company, as now it may have with its fellows.

Sir, you may thus far acquit me: I am not envious in this motion, while I adventure this for the public good, to have that made beneficial to others, which I might closely have engrossed to myself. If you chide me not downright for thus anticipating your leave to make you better than your word, I shall have the confidence to take it, ex post facto, *for granted.*

I now commit you to those your happy enjoyments of God and yourself, and rest, Sir,

Your very much and deservedly devoted,

G. H.

SONGS IN THE NIGHT.

SECT. I.

When thou saidst, O Saviour, *The night cometh when no man can work*; John ix. 4. thou didst not mean to exclude the work of thy praise. There is no time, wherein that can be unseasonable: yea, rather, as all our artificial melody is wont to sound sweetest in the dark; so those Songs are most pleasing to thee, which we sing in the saddest Night of our affliction.

O God, it is easy for those, whose *bones thou hast filled with marrow*, (Job xxi. 24.) to be cheerful; but, to make *the bones, which thou hast broken*, to *rejoice*, (Ps. li. 8.) it is doubtless the praise of thy mercy. It was the charge of th blessed Apostle, that, *if any man be afflicted*, he should *pray; if merry*, he should *sing psalms*; James v. 13: and this, doubtless, is the ordinary temper of a Christian soul; but, if a man can be so affected, as to pray fervently in the height of his mirth, and to sing cheerfully in the depth of his affliction, he can be no other than eminent in grace, and strongly wrought upon by the God of all Comfort.

It is a true word of Elihu, thou only, *O God*, our *Maker*, art he, *that givest Songs in the Night*; Job xxxv. 10. The night is a dismal season, attended with solitude and horror; and an aggravation of those pains and cares, whereof the day is, in any sort, guilty. The light, besides a natural cheeriness, may afford some diversions of sorrow; and present us with such objects and occurrences, as may somewhat allay the sensibleness of our grief: but the night takes part with our misery, and adds no little to our discomfort. Songs, therefore, in the Night are not, cannot be of nature's making; but are the sole gift of the Heavenly Comforter.

And if we, out of the strength of our moral powers, shall be setting Songs to ourselves in the Night of our utmost disconsolation, woe is me, how miserably out of tune they are! how harsh, how mis-accented, how discordous even to the sense of our own souls; much more in the ears of thee the Almighty, in whom dwells nothing beneath an infinite perfection!

But the Songs, that thou, O God, puttest into the mouths of thy servants, in the Night of their tribulation, are so exquisitely harmonious, as that thine angels rejoice to hear them, and disdain not to match them with their Hallelujahs in heaven.

Could there be a more gloomy Night, than that, which thy servants Paul and Silas spent in the gaol of Thyatira? Acts xvi. Pri-

sons are, at the best, darksome; it being one part of the punishment of offenders, to be debarred of the benefit of the light. But this, to make it more sad, was the inner prison; the dungeon of that woeful gaol: where, yet, they are not allowed the liberty, either to move or stand; but have their hands manacled, and their feet fast locked in the stocks. There lie thy two precious servants, in little ease; their backs smarting, with their late merciless stripes; their legs galled, with their pinching restraint: when, in their midnight, thou gavest them Songs of such sweetness and power, that the very earth and the stones of their prison did move, and as it were dance at that melody; the doors fly open; the fetters fall off; the keeper trembles; the whole house is filled with affright and amazement. The fellow-prisoners, whose durance had been inured to nothing but sighs and moans, wondered to hear such music, in their cold cells, at midnight: but, when they felt their irons shaken off, and the bolts burst, and the doors seeming to invite them to a sudden liberty; how were they astonished to think of the power of that heavenly charm, which had wrought so miraculous a change!

Neither was it otherwise, with the rest of those blessed messengers of glad tidings of salvation. What other was it, than the night of persecution, with Peter and the other Apostles, when they were scourged for preaching the Gospel of Peace? How pleasing Songs didst thou give them, in this Night of their pain! Neither were their backs more full of wales, than their mouths of laughter, for *they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Jesus*; Acts v. 41.

And, as all these are animated by one and the same spirit, what other was the disposition and carriage of all those glorious Martyrs and Confessors of all times, which sealed the truth of the Gospel with their blood? When the Night was darkest, their Songs were sweetest. Even when tyranny had wearied itself with their torments, their exultations were at the highest. Never have there been more heavenly ditties, than those, which have been sung at the stake: neither hath any man gone with more joy to his wedding, than these holy souls have gone to meet their Saviour in those flames.

Neither may we think, that the melody of these Nightly Songs hath been only reserved for these evangelical worthies; but the same divine notes have been put into the mouths of all God's Saints, in all ages of his Church. The distresses of all the darlings of God upon earth have still been thus alleviated, with the divine strains of spiritual comfort.

Such were the Songs of Noah, when, from the close prison of the ark, he descended to the altar; offering a cheerful sacrifice to his God, in the praise of his gracious preservation; Gen. viii. 21. Such was Jacob's, upon his hard night's lodging in Bethel. Such was Joseph's, in Pharaoh's gaol. Such was Moses's, more than once in the desert. Such was Jonah's in *the belly of hell*, as he styles the loathsome gorge of the dreadful sea-monster; Jonah ii. 2.

But, above all, the Sweet Singer of Israel must pass for the most

glorious pattern, not only of the sacred music of the day, but of Songs also in the Night. Those heavenly composures of his represent him to us, as never void, either of troubles or gratulations; yea, of cheerful gratulations, in the midst of his troubles. Do I hear him passionately bewailing his heavy condition; *My soul is sore troubled: I am weary of my groaning: every night wash I my bed with my tears?* Ps. vi. 3, 6. Lo, whilst I am ready to pity his hopeless distress, and to say, "Alas, what evil will become of this woeful soul?" comfort breaks forth from heaven; and the next breath triumphs over the insultations of his enemies, and cheers him up with a confident assurance of mercy; *Away from me, all ye workers of iniquity; for the Lord hath heard the voice of my weeping;* v. 8. It was no small pang of discomfort, that made him say, *Thou didst turn away thy face from me, and I was troubled;* Ps. xxx. 7. Lo, this was David's night, when the sun of heavenly consolations was withdrawn from him: will you hear his Song in this Night? *Lord, thou hast turned my mourning into dancing: thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness;* v. 11. The case may seem to have been much worse with him, when he cries out, *Thy hand is heavy upon me day and night, and my moisture is like the drought of summer;* Ps. xxxii. 4: but, in the darkest Night of his sorrow, his Song is loud and cheerful; *Thou shalt preserve me from trouble: thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance. Be glad, ye righteous, and rejoice in the Lord; and be joyful, all that are true of heart;* vv. 7, 11. What was it other than Night with him, when he complains to be neglected of the Highest? *How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord; for ever? how long wilt thou hide thy face from me?* Ps. xiii. 1: and what merrier note could there be, than that, which he instantly sings, *But my trust is in thy mercy, and my heart is joyful in thy salvation: I will sing of the Lord, because he hath dealt so bountifully with me?* vv. 5, 6. Lastly, for nothing were more easy than to trace the footsteps of the holy Psalmist through all his heavenly ditties, no Night could be equally dark to that wherein he cries out, *The snares of death compassed me round about, and the pains of hell got hold upon me;* Ps. cxvi. 3: no Song could be sweeter, than *gracious is the Lord, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful: I was in misery, and he helped me. Turn again to thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee: For thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling;* vv. 5—8.

But what do I instance in these singular patterns of a holy cheerfulness under affliction, when the Chosen Vessel ranks it amongst the gracious dispositions of the faithful soul? *Not so only*, saith he to his Roman converts, *but we glory in tribulations also;* Rom. v. 3. And his fellow Apostle, no less sweetly, seconds him: *My brethren, count it all joy, when ye fall into divers temptations;* James i. 2.

Lo, these divine oracles do not tell us of joy, after our sorrows and afflictions: this were no news to God's children in this vale of tears: *Weeping may endure for a night*, saith the Psalmist: *joy cometh in the morning;* Ps. xxx. 5: but they speak of joy, in the very brunt

of our sufferings; as if they laid before us Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego singing in the midst of their flames; Dan. iii.

This is a temper of the soul, not more excellent, than hard to be attained. We all aspire towards it: not many reach up to it. To be patient under a heavy cross, is no small praise: to be contented, is more: but, to be cheerful, is the highest pitch of Christian fortitude. Not to send forth the juice of sorrow, such is our tears, when we are hard pressed, is manly: but, to smile upon torture, and to sing when others shriek, is no less than heroical.

There is, I confess, no little advantage, this way, in the difference of constitutions: whereof some are more soft and melting; others, more hardy and obdurate: some are naturally more malleable to afflictions; others, more waxen to all impressions of grief. Wise Seneca observed some, in his time, that took a kind of pride and contentment in being slashed and mangled; whereas, others, for but a box on the ear, are ready to cry out "Murder." The valiant Goths held it a perpetual shame, for one of their sword-men to wink in receiving a wound; when as a delicate Sybarite * complains, that the rose-leaves lie doubled under his back.

But, as weak hearts do commonly break under heavy afflictions; so the strongest shall find it difficult enough, not to buckle under the weight of some crosses: but, to go lightly and nimbly away with the most pressing load of this kind, is more than a merely human strength can perform. Neither would the Holy Ghost have appropriated to himself the title of *Comforter*, and the *God of all Comfort*, if any mortal power could be able to do this great work without him; John xiv. 26. 2 Cor. i. 3. Isa. li. 12.

SECT. II.

THE Holy Spirit then, as being a most free agent, is sometimes pleased, immediately to cast into the soul the comfortable gleams of heavenly consolations; but, ordinarily, he causeth this gracious cheerfulness in the heart of believers, by working them to strong resolutions, grounded upon powerful and irrefragable motives; such as are fetched from the Author, the Intention, the Nature, the Issue of our affliction.

SECT. III.

THE Temanite said well, *Affliction cometh not forth of the dust; neither doth trouble spring out of the ground;* Job v. 6. It is not of so base an original as earth, but DERIVES ITSELF FROM HEAVEN; even from the Father of all Mercies. That Great and Holy God, who is most justly jealous of his own honour, will not lose the glory of

* Mindirydes.

working and managing the far greater part of human occurrences: since the contentments, that we can hope for, are not the tythe of those miseries, which we must look to meet with in this our earthly pilgrimage. This right, therefore, the Almighty wholly challengeth to himself: *I make peace and create evil: I, the Lord, do all these things;* Isa. xlv. 7. *Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?* saith the Prophet; Amos iii. 6.

Why then do I not thus argue with myself in my sufferings?

"Is it not the hand of my good God, that lies thus heavy upon me? Can I, but acknowledge him, to be a God of infinite wisdom and infinite mercy? If of infinite wisdom, how can he but know what is best for me? if of infinite mercy, how can he but do what he knows to be best? And, if it be best for me to suffer, why should I not be cheerful in suffering? What do I looking to second hands? This man, that beast: this fever, that tempest; this fire, that inundation, are but his rods: the hand is his, that wields them: their malignity is their own: nothing, but goodness, proceeds from him, that useth them to my advantage: *It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good;* 1 Sam. iii. 18. If but as a creature, O God, thou hast full right to dispose of me as thou wilt; I am thy clay, fashion me as thou pleasest: but, as thy redeemed one, as thine adopted one, I have full and dear interest in thee as a Father; and thou canst be no other than thyself. Let it not be enough for me, to hold my peace, because thou Lord hast done it; but, let me break silence, in praising thy Name, for that thou, *in very faithfulness and love, hast afflicted me;* Ps. cxix. 75. The *fathers of our flesh*, even though they whip us unduly and out of passion, yet we kneel to their persons, and cling to their knees, and kiss their rods: how much more should I adore thine infinite goodness, in all thy holy, righteous, merciful corrections! It is for a slave, to grudge at the scourges of a cruel master: he is not worthy to pass for thy child, that receives not thy stripes with a reverent meekness. Tears may be here allowed; but a reluctant frown were no better than rebellion. Let infidels then and ignorants, who think they suffer by chance, and impute all their crosses to the next hand, looking no higher than their own heads, repine at their adversities, and be dejected with their afflictions: for me, who know that I have a Father in Heaven, full of mercy and compassion, whose providence hath measured out to a scruple the due proportions of my sorrows, counting my sighs and reserving the tears which he wrings from me in his bottle; why do I not patiently lie down, and put my mouth in the dust, (Lam. iii. 29.) meekly submitting to his holy pleasure, and blessing the hand from which I smart?"

SECT. IV.

THE INTENT of the Agent must needs work a great difference, in our construction of the act.

An enemy, we know, strikes with an intention to wound, and

kill: no father means to maim his child, in beating him: his tender heart is far from intending any bodily hurt to the fruit of his loins. The chirurgeon and the executioner do both the same act: both cut off the limb: but, the one, to save a patient; the other, to punish an offender.

O Father of Mercies, since it is thou, that strikest me, I know thou canst have no other thoughts, but of love and compassion to my soul. O thou Heavenly Physician, if thou hast decreed me to be blooded or canterized, I know it cannot be but for my health: and if, for my bodily cure, I do not only admit of these painful remedies, but reward them; how should I bless thee for this beneficial pain thou puttest me to, for my spiritual and eternal welfare! What an unthankful wretch shall I be, if I be not more sensible of thy favour, than of my own complaint!

Thus much of thy will, O God, hast thou revealed to us, as to let us know, that all thine intentions, in the afflictions of thy chosen ones, have respect either to thyself, or to them: to thyself, in the Glory that redounds to thy Name, in their sustentation and deliverance; to them, whether for their Trial or their Bettering.

1. Thine Israel, O God, had never endured so hard a bondage under Pharaoh, as to be over-swelted in the Egyptian furnaces, to be laded with mercilesss stripes, to be stinted unto impossible tasks, had it not been to magnify thy Almighty power, in supporting them against the rage of tyranny; and revenging their wrongs upon their oppressors, by miraculous plagues, and an unexampled destruction.

When thy disciples, O Saviour, upon the sight of the poor blind-born beggar, took the boldness to ask thee who had sinned, *this man or his parents, that he was born blind;* it pleased thee to return them this quick answer, *Neither hath this man sinned nor his parents, but that the works of God should be made manifest in him;* John ix. 3. Surely, the event justified thy words. All the eyes of the beholders of this poor dark soul did not win so much glory to thee, as this man's want of eyes, so omnipotently supplied by thy divine power. Restoring of sight was nothing, in comparison of creating it: nature, and art, hath done that; none, but the God of Nature, could effect this. No doubt, this now-seeing beggar could not but bless thee for his blindness, that gave thee occasion of shewing this miraculous proof of thy Deity; and applauded his own happiness, in being made the subject of so convictive a miracle.

Had not Lazarus sickened, and died, and smelt of the grave, where had been the glory, which accrued to thee, by his resuscitation?

Had not Daniel lodged in the lion's den, and the three children taken possession of the fiery furnace, where had been the glory of their admired preservation?

Most just it is, then, O Lord, that thine eye should be most upon

thine honour, in our suffering; and just cause have we to rejoice and sing to thy praise, if thou have vouchsafed to make us, in any sort, examples of thy power and mercy.

2. But, withal, it pleases thee, in the intentions of our afflictions, to cast some glances of respect upon us thy weak servants upon earth.

(1.) For our Trial and Probation.

How remarkable a proof whereof hast thou given us, in that great Pattern of Patience! who had never been brought forth into the theatre of the world, to encounter with so prodigious calamities, had it not been to make good his challenged integrity. It was thy pleasure, in a holy kind of gloriation, to assert the sincerity of that gracious servant of thine. The Envious Spirit, as impatient of so much goodness to be found in man, maliciously traduces that piety as mercenary: thou, who knowest what grace thou hadst given him, yieldest to have it put to the test. The probation is, beyond all example, painful, but glorious. Job pays dear, for the conviction of that Lying Spirit. His innocence, and truth, triumphs over malice, shames the adversary, wins honour to thy Name, and renders him a rare and memorable example of mercy.

What are heresies, but the spiritual distempers of the Church, the bane of religion, flashes of hell, breaking out for disturbance and destruction? yet there *must be heresies*, saith the Apostle to his Corinthians, *that those, which are approved, may be made manifest among you*; 1 Cor. xi. 19. Lo, if there were no falsehood, truth would want much of her lustre: and, if there were no enemy, what place would there be for victory?

Goodness is so conscious of its own worth and pureness, that it rejoiceth to be tried home: hence it is, that the man after God's own heart makes it his earnest suit to his God: *Examine me, O Lord, and prove me; try my reins and my heart; for thy loving-kindness is before mine eyes, and I have walked in thy truth*; Ps. xxvi. 2, 3.

There is much forgery in the world, neither is there any virtue under heaven, whereof there are not many counterfeits. Hypocrisy makes a more glorious shew, than the truest piety; and many a real Saint is branded with simulation.

The most wise God knows how to discover the true state of all hearts, by affliction. Every face thus appears in its own hue; and, then, no marvel if the sincere and upright soul rejoice to have her truth and innocence gloriously vindicated, and made conspicuous to all eyes: *That the trial of* her *faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried by the fire, may be found unto praise, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ*; 1 Pet. i. 7.

(2.) But the far more excellent and gracious drift of our afflictions, is, the Bettering of our Souls.

He, that could say, *Remember David, and all his troubles*, could also say, *It is good for me, that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes*; Ps. cxix. 71.

Well, therefore, did the angel, that spake to Daniel, put these

two together; telling him, that those persecutions, which should befal God's people, should *try them*, and *purge them*, and *make them white*; Dan. xi. 35: according to that, which the Lord speaks by his Prophet Zechariah, *I will bring the third part through the fire; and will refine them, as silver and gold is refined: and they shall call upon my name, and I will hear them*; Zech. xiii. 9.

How justly, then, doth the Apostle profess to glory in tribulation; as knowing, *that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed!* Rom. v. 3, 4, 5.

Oh, the sweet and happy fruit of affliction! Who would not welcome that pain of body, which works health to the soul? that loss of goods or temporal estate, that enriches the soul? that trouble and disquiet, that brings a sweet peace of conscience, and joy in the Holy Ghost?

How many have we seen, that, with Jeshurun have *waxed fat, and kicked* against the Almighty, in the pampered time of their prosperity; Deut. xxxii. 15. who, in the time of their trouble, have, with broken hearts and bended knees, sought their God, and found him to their unspeakable comfort! How many, that have been fast galloping towards hell, in the lawless course of their wilful sins, have, in the midst of their career, been stopped by the hand of a good God, through a sudden affliction!

Oh, the indulgent strokes of a gracious God, that whips us here, *that we should not be condemned with the world!* 1 Cor. xi. 32. *Let the righteous* God *thus smite me; it shall be a kindness: and let him reprove me; it shall be an excellent oil, which shall not break my head*; Ps. cxli. 5.

SECT. V.

ACCORDING to the merciful intentions of the Almighty, thus healing and sovereign is affliction, in the very NATURE of it, to all God's dear ones upon earth; as being only a fatherly chastisement, not a severe punishment, wherever it falls. Even then, therefore, when he seems to frown upon them, he comes to them, not with a sword in his hand, but with a rod; not for his own revenge, but for their emendation.

The best of us is deeply sin-sick: this bitter potion is it, that can only purge out all our peccant humours; and restore us to that good temper of spiritual health, wherein we may comfortably enjoy God and ourselves. We all, as vessels of impure metal, through long security and disuse of holy duties, have contracted much rust: it is the gentle fire of seasonable affliction, that must cleanse us; and make us fit for the service of our Maker: as he speaks of his peculiar people, by the mouth of his Prophet; *Behold, I have refined thee; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction*, Is. xlviii. 10.

Oh, that my soul could bless thee, my God; and adore thy justice,

and mercy, in the differences of thy proceedings with the sons of men! For wicked men and presumptuous sinners, thou hast reserved *the cup of trembling*, and *the dregs of the cup of* thy *fury*, Isa. li. 22. which they shall drink up, and die for ever: in the mean time, they feast without fear, and let themselves loose to all jollity and pleasure; as having *made a league with death, and an agreement with hell:* Whereas, the failings of thy faithful, but weak, servants are smartingly rewarded, with the lashes of painful afflictions here, and passed over with silence in the reckonings of eternity; while their humble penitence admits them to a gracious pardon in this world, and everlasting blessedness in the other.

Even so, Lord, let not *thy staff* only, but *thy rod* also *comfort me.* Let *thy loving correction make me*, however unworthy, *great* in thy favour; and let me bleed from that hand, which upholds me here, and shall crown me hereafter.

SECT. VI.

It is easy enough to observe, that the main comfort of our sufferings must be expected from the ISSUE: *for no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness, to them which are thereby exercised.* Heb. xii. 11.

There is an end of all our sorrows; and that end is happy: such, as makes more than abundant amends for all our sufferings. *Those, that sow in tears, shall reap in joy;* Ps. cxxvi. 5. *Oh, thou afflicted, tossed with tempests and not comforted; behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires: And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones;* Isa. liv. 11, 12. Indeed, *many are the afflictions of the righteous; but the Lord delivereth him out of them all;* Ps. xxxiv. 19: yea, delivereth him, not without triumph and infinite advantage; *Though they have lain among the pots, yet shall they be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold;* Ps. lxviii. 13.

It is not seldom seen, that God is pleased to recompense the sufferings of his servants, with a sensible advancement in this present world. Job is double the richer, for his losses: and Joseph changed the nasty rags of his prison, for the fine linen of Egypt; and his gaol, for a throne next to Pharaoh's.

But, the full and unfailable perfection of their glorious amends abides for them in heaven: *For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;* 2 Cor. iv. 17.

Lo, this, this is it, the assured expectation whereof is able to turn all the sorrows, which the soul is capable of, into joy. It was a heavenly word, which is said to have fallen from a mortified vo-

tary, whom Rome honours for a Saint: "So great is the glory that I look for, as that all pain is a pleasure to me."

And, surely, could our narrow hearts apprehend it aright, so transcendent is the glory of this retribution, that we should not grudge at the condition, if we were allotted to pass through the torments of hell to so great a blessedness. How much more, therefore, should we, in intuition of this eternal happiness, lightly turn over those slight miseries, which are incident unto us, in this our short pilgrimage upon earth.

Methinks, I see with what courage and scorn, in this regard, that famous Confessor, Marcus Arethusius, looked down upon his persecutors; when, being hanged up in a basket betwixt heaven and earth, his naked body all gashed with wounds, and anointed with honey to invite the wasps and hornets to that cruel banquet; he cheerfully insulted over the malicious spectators below, as poor terrene wretches, creeping upon the base earth; whereas himself was now advanced aloft, towards that heaven, whereto he was aspiring.

With what pity, did the valiant Martyrs behold their enraged tyrants and wearied tormentors, when they looked up to their heaven; and, with the eyes of their faith, saw that, which the Protomartyr saw with bodily eyes, the heavens opened, and their Jesus standing at the right-hand of God ready to crown them with glory!

For us, we may not all be martyrs; but we must all be sufferers: for, *through many tribulations must we enter into the kingdom of God*; Acts xiv. 22: *and, if we suffer with Christ, we shall also reign with him*; 2 Tim. ii. 12.

O poor tribulations, in respect to that kingdom! How can we be sensible of these flea-bitings, when we have a blessed eternity in our eye?

O God, bless thou mine eye with this sight, I shall not forbear to sing in the Night of death itself; much less, in the twilight of all these worldly afflictions.

SECT. VII.

COME, then, all ye earthly crosses; and muster up all your forces against me. Here is that, which is able to make me more than a conqueror over you all.

Have I lost my goods, and foregone a fair estate?—Had all the earth been mine, what is it to heaven? Had I been the lord of all the world, what were this to a kingdom of glory?

Have I parted with a dear consort; the sweet companion of my youth; the tender nurse of my age; the partner of my sorrows, for these forty-eight years?—She is but stept a little before me to that happy rest, which I am panting towards; and wherein I shall speedily overtake her. In the mean time, and ever, my soul

is espoused to that Glorious and Immortal Husband, from whom it shall never be parted.

Am I bereaved of some of my dear children, the sweet pledges of our matrimonial love; whose parts and hopes promised me comfort in my declined age?—Why am I not rather thankful it hath pleased my God, out of my loins to furnish heaven with some happy guests? Why do I not, instead of mourning for their loss, sing praises to God, for preferring them to that eternal blessedness?

Am I afflicted with bodily pain and sickness, which banisheth all sleep from my eyes, and exercises me with a lingering torture?—Ere long, this momentary distemper shall end in an everlasting rest.

Am I threatened by the sword of an enemy?—Suppose that man to be one of the guardians of paradise, and that sword as flaming as it is sharp, that one stroke shall let me into that place of unconceivable pleasure, and admit me to feed on the tree of life for ever.

Cheer up, then, O my soul; and, upon the fixed apprehension of the glory to be revealed, while thy weak partner, my body, droops and languishes under the sad load of years and infirmities, sing thou to thy God, even in the midnight of thy sorrows, and in the deepest darkness of death itself, Songs of confidence, Songs of spiritual joy, Songs of praise and thanksgiving: saying, with all the glorified ones; *Blessing, honour, glory, and power be unto him, that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever;* Amen; Rev. v. 13.

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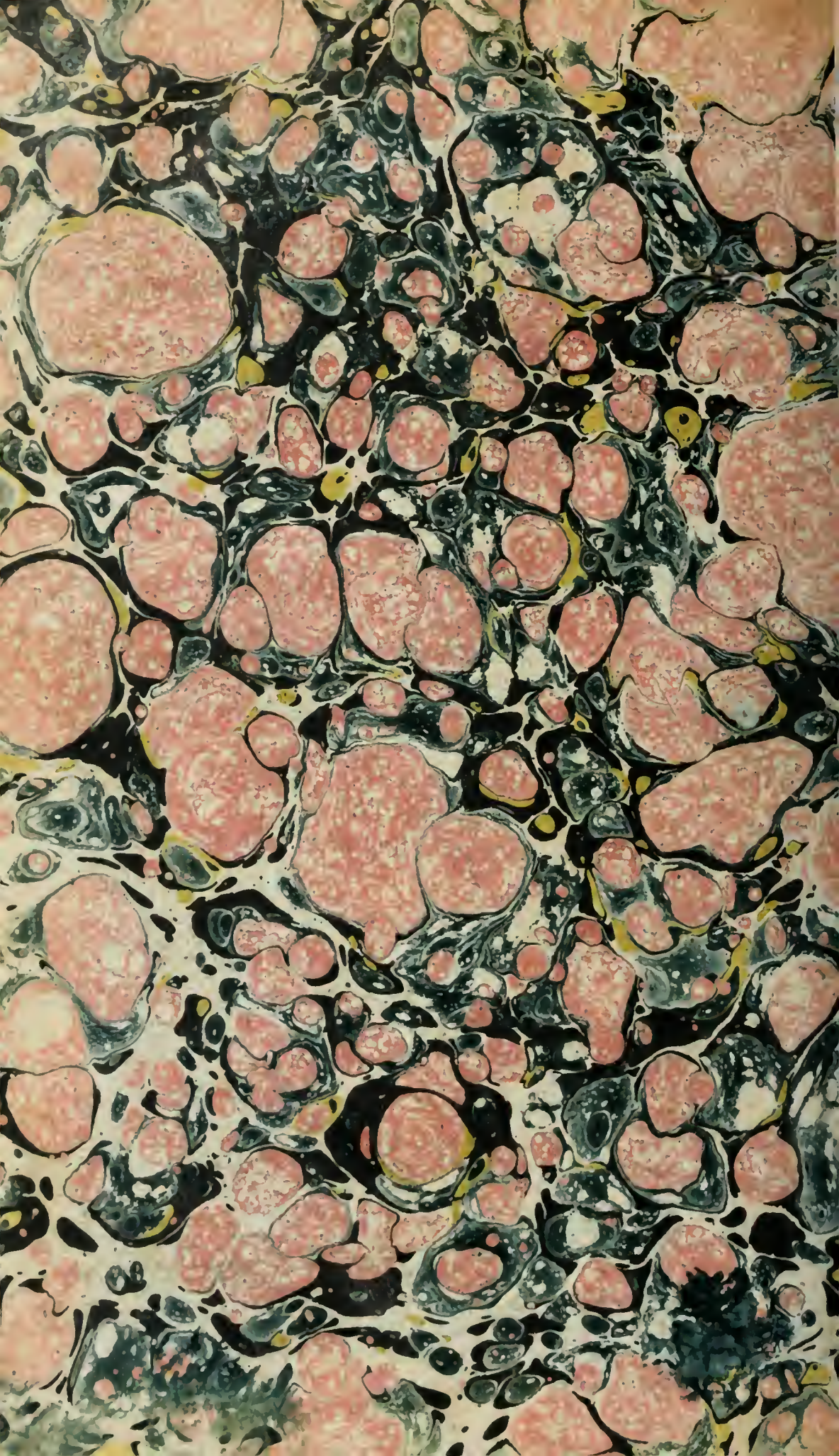

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